



28. The World's Fundamental Law of Love

Our whole Schoenstatt spirituality is based on the covenant of love. This covenant of love became a tangible reality – in history, at a place and in people – on 18 October 1914, in the shrine, with the Blessed Mother as the “Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt”, and with the founder and co-founders.

The covenant of love that developed in this way is the practical realization of the most fundamental truth about God, and is based on the conviction that he is at work in creation: the “world’s fundamental law of love”, as the founder put it.

We can come across references to and discussions of the fundamental law of the world in many texts. In this the founder was not just concerned with the theological truth that God created the world out of love, but far more with drawing the pedagogical consequences – that human beings should live by this truth.

The following text is taken from the eighth Conference in the retreat course on “Perfect Joy in Life”, given in the morning of 10 October 1934.

In addition to noting the special warmth and enthusiasm with which Fr Kentenich spoke, it would help us to understand the text better if we were aware of the historical situation in which he was speaking.

- 1. The conference was held at a time when sermons and religious instructions were far more moralistic and directed towards avoiding sin. During the second half of the last century, and above all following the Second Vatican Council, there was a clear shift of emphasis in many areas in the Church towards what Fr Kentenich had already thought and worked for many years.*
- 2. In 1934 Germany was already subject to the influence of National Socialism (Nazis). It was clear that a difficult time lay ahead for the Church, a time of persecution. It was precisely in this time that Fr Kentenich emphasised “Perfect Joy in Life”, and stressed that the heavy blows of fate could only be coped with through the fundamental force of love, and that fear could only be overcome by increased love.*

It should not be difficult to apply our founder's fundamental ideas to our present times, and correlate them in an original way with the feeling of the people of today for life.

The following text is taken from "Vollkommene Lebensfreude" – Perfect Joy in Life, Retreat for Priests, Vallendar-Schoenstatt 1984, p. 216-243.

So far we have tried to grow more deeply into the realm of perfect priestly joy in life on the level of experience and knowledge. Perhaps, despite the strongly positive attitude that has accompanied us during these days, we have also at the same time grown into the seriousness and force of our calling to be redeemers. We may not overlook that we can, and may, and must share in the God-Man's calling to be Redeemer and Messiah. So we can understand how he can call out to us while pointing to his own example and life: "No one can have greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends".²¹ From this it follows for us – setting aside our personal experiences and observations of life – that the greatest joy is always sacrificial joy; but it also follows that the source of sacrificial joy is sacrificial love. This brings us to the pedagogy of joy.

So far we have worked out a psychology, a biblical and liturgical theology, and a philosophy of joy, and as a result have orientated mind and heart longingly to the fruit of joy. This should have prepared us all the more for the question: How do we arrive at an education for joy; how can we be masters of joy, examples of joy and indeed apostles of joy? The organic, psychological context is obvious: The source of joy has to well up powerfully in our soul. If I want to become a master of joy, an apostle of joy, I will have to be an artist, an apostle, a master of a very profound and uplifting love of God.

So from now on, as we have done until now, we want to strive more deeply, more inwardly and more sincerely for a high degree of love for God. In this chaotic time with its churned up ideas, we see it as our task to arrive at clarity in our ideas and thoughts about all current questions and their solution. This is so important for our apostolic and pastoral work, as well as for the work we have to do in our own hearts, if we are to take a stand to these questions. Allow me, therefore, to show you the source of joy, uplifting love of God, in a very modern context, when I describe the love of God as the elemental, grandiose, fundamental law of the world.

Even when we hear that concept, we begin to guess that we have before us a statement that has a profoundly practical and theoretical significance. If I really take my stand on the world's fundamental law, the difficult and most complex problems that so confuse the hearts and minds of people today must seem to be easily and confidently solved.

Let me only mention the serious and confusing question: Why is it that the wicked and the liars triumph, and the truthful and childlike, the people who are faithful to God, succumb? Where can we find the ultimate answer? Why is it that we have to bear so many serious and painful blows of fate, hammer blows? Have we deserved them, and how have we deserved them? What is God's

²¹ Jn 15,13.

intention with all these things? The answer? It will be easy to give an answer once we have understood with our whole soul what we want to express with the statement: God's love is the fundamental law of the world.

This law is not only theoretically important, it has a very profound and practical significance. You will also begin to guess what it is. Whoever can really take a stand with his whole soul on this law, will have the cornerstone for the conduct of his life, his understanding of life and the formation of his life. It could be that at the end of this course we will have the feeling and awareness that our soul is in the process of being transformed.

For me this is also one of the loveliest goals of this year's course. I not only want you to go out with a number of newly coloured and clear ideas, but with the beginning of a transformation of your feeling for life. Our attitude to life has to be transformed. I am turning in particular to those priests who have been coming here year after year, but who have not managed to create a turning point in their soul.

So you can understand it when I try to present this fundamental law of the world objectively, and as exactly and clearly as possible, while climbing methodically step by step.

In order to be as clear as possible, let me give you a disposition immediately. We will remain true to the theme I gave at the beginning and try to do two things: firstly, to feel our way in very general terms into this great fundamental law. Once we have done this sufficiently, we will begin, secondly, to try to penetrate this fundamental law of the world with our thoughts and our faith. We are not concerned here with giving a rationale for the world's fundamental law, but merely with explaining it and therefore preparing the ground of our souls for a general introduction.

So why do we ask: What is the world's fundamental law? God has a reason for everything he does. Let us now look for the reason that motivated him to create the world, to govern it, to lead it and to redeem it. There are so many questions that are practically made to measure for us today, that can give rise to so many difficulties and crises – even for us, not just our people. They have to be touched on and examined, and traced back to the reason that motivated God to act in this or that way. Why did he create the world, or why does he allow this or that, why this, why that?

We don't just want to ask about the autonomous reason, but about the world's fundamental law, the ultimate source, the ultimate basis for all these laws. It is relatively easy for us to give a more or less accurate reason for all that happens in the world. For example, what causes the change of the seasons? Or, we could easily say: Why did God send the blows of fate? I can feel it in the life of my family: This or that could be the reason why God willed it directly. We are not asking about these second last or third last reasons. We are asking about the fundamental law of the world, the ultimate reason for all reasons in God that move him to act in this or that way, or to refrain from this or that. What is the ultimate reason that motivates God in everything he does or refrains from doing? Where is the point in God that ultimately and most deeply makes a theodicy possible for us? Theodicy, seen from our point-of-view, is nothing else than a justification or defence of God. Where is the point from which it becomes easy for us to justify or defend what God does? I am talking from a human standpoint. What is the reason for the great crises among the peoples and nations? Why is Bolshevism a danger throughout the world? That is the question about the fundamental law of the world.

The answer we can and may give is: The world's fundamental law is love.

Allow me to remind you that you should not expect me to prove this at the moment. I will do that later. At present I only want to clarify and explain. The world's fundamental law is God's love. Weigh up what I have said! This can mean, firstly, God's love for me, and secondly, my love for God!

There we already have it, the two essential aspects of the world's fundamental law. The world's fundamental law has a divine and a human aspect. Both sides, the divine and the human, are governed by three things: Everything out of love, everything through love, everything for love.

The divine side: Why has God done everything? Please apply this immediately to the most insignificant work of the day: Everything out of love, everything through love, everything for love. What follows from this for the human aspect of the world's fundamental law? The same: Everything out of love, everything through love, and everything for love.

Please take note of the wonderful circle, the powerful stream of love that flows and surges through heaven, through people, and through the world. Allow me to make a comparison: There we have water; it evaporates once it has flowed into the sea, it rises up to the clouds and falls again to the earth as rain. There we have the huge, elemental stream of life flowing through the world. In the same way we can talk about an elemental stream of life and love that unites God, human beings and the world, and constantly keeps them in contact.

Let us consider the divine aspect of the world's fundamental law: "Out of love". What is the world's fundamental law? The answer: God's love.

Would you like to place these thoughts into a larger context? To start with I could use another, more easily understandable expression for 'God's love'. If I tell you it is God's will to give himself completely, it is God's will to communicate himself, will you understand what I am trying to say? I have deliberately not said it is God's drive to give himself, his drive to communicate himself. This would suggest that God is dependent. What he does is not compulsive. Whatever God does is the expression of his conscious willing, his clear, autonomous and inwardly free intention. This also applies to God's love as his will to communicate himself, to give himself. Scheeben²² pointed out that God's will to give is so elemental that he is unable to withstand it. This sees a truth but gives it exaggerated emphasis. I may not accept this, because God would then lose his sovereign freedom.

So let us remember that the world's fundamental law is God's will to communicate himself. Please pray these thoughts through and think them through somewhat. Otherwise the content of what I have said will not penetrate our soul. God acts through love, that is to say, he does everything because of his will to communicate himself, his will to give himself – everything out of love, through love and for love.

Part One: Everything out of love

What does that mean: Everything out of love? I want to use the concept love so that we arrive at our goal more quickly. *Causa motiva efficiens*²³ of all that God does is his love. I think I must put it more clearly: I would have to say that the main motive, the world's fundamental law in everything

²² Matthias Joseph Scheeben, theological writer of acknowledged merit, born at Meckenheim near Bonn, 1 March, 1835; died at Cologne, 21 July, 1888. Often quoted by Fr Kentenich.

²³ The cause of what he does.

that happens in the world – at the creation of the world, the redemption of the world, the government of the world, or whatever you may call it – is God’s love. There are also secondary motives that move him and accompany him. These are his justice and his omnipotence. We could say for this: his creative will to design everything and his sense of justice. When I said that the world’s fundamental law, seen from God’s point-of-view, is “Everything out of love”, it means that the main motivation is love; there could be other secondary motives.

If you have debated the present-day religious cultural trends somewhat, you will find that in his research Kierkegaard²⁴ discovered other expressions for what I have formulated very simply. In God there are a number of different motives for what he does. There are three: an aesthetical reason, an ethical reason and a religious reason.

His aesthetical reason: Here his creative will to design and form is at work. The artist has a very strong will to design and form. The aesthetical motive in God is his will to design and form. The ethical motive is his sense of justice, and the religious motive is love.

Please notice how this line of reasoning picks up a study made by St Bernard. Meditation has three degrees: Firstly, *admiratio divinae majestatis* – the admiration of God’s majesty, his creative will to design and form; secondly, meditation on God’s blessings, God’s love; and thirdly, *admiratio justitiae divinae* – the admiration of God’s justice, his sense of justice.

Has this helped us to work our way somewhat into the whole complex of ideas? Allow me to add that it is obvious that in everything God does, there are also other motives at work – the aesthetical and the ethical. However, these may not be regarded as the central motives; they are not the world’s fundamental law.

Work your way through these thoughts. Think of the aesthetic motive, of God’s creative will to design and form. Isn’t it natural for those who look at the world even with slightly open eyes, who are even somewhat open for the wonderful phenomena of nature, for the order God has built into his creation, to see how much beauty God has poured out; isn’t it natural that in the end such people will come to the conclusion: Whoever has done that must without doubt possess an extraordinarily strong and creative will to design and form, an extraordinarily strong sense of beauty?

Think of the expression: Zeus²⁵ is playing. It refers to God’s playful instinct, his instinct to design and form. Since God is playing, he casts his glories into the universe. Read the book of Wisdom: Before the world existed she already played before God. Human beings played before God before things came into existence.²⁶

So we may take it that in God’s creative and formative activity also his aesthetical will was at work – let us say the artist in him. Yet this aesthetical motive cannot be the world’s fundamental law. Why? How else could we explain the cross and suffering and injustice, unless we maintained that God simply played without any sense of responsibility; he simply gave free rein to his creative will to design and form without considering its effect and goal? To suppose this contradicts my own

²⁴ Søren Aabye Kierkegaard (5 May 1813 – 11 November 1855), a 19th century Danish philosopher and theologian, is usually thought of as the first existentialist philosopher.

²⁵ Zeus is the King of the gods, the ruler of Mount Olympus and the god of the sky and thunder in Greek mythology. His symbols are the thunderbolt, eagle, bull and oak.

²⁶ Cf. Prov 8,22-31.

personal feeling. Which of us would suppose that someone would act in this way? Even less may we suppose this of God. The aesthetical motive was an ancillary motive, an accompanying motive, but it was never the central motive.

Take God's sense of justice, the ethical motive. Without doubt God is the Just One. We can easily see this in all that happens in the world, especially when God intervenes in events to punish. Punishment, guilt, reparation, can easily be explained if we recognise God's sense of justice as the world's fundamental law. We may at least explain that God's sense of justice is an accompanying motive; it is also at work in the way he governs and redeems the world. But may we understand justice as the world's fundamental law, as the ultimate reason for all God's actions, thinking and willing?

Allow me to give three answers.

Firstly, it would be unworthy of God. In order to explain the significance of that statement and to fill it with meaning, I would have to reach back to Immanuel Kant,²⁷ who was a strong proponent of this opinion. How would we have to imagine God if we argued in favour of this extreme opinion? God would stand before us constantly concerned about his honour! Only one thing is his ultimate goal: He makes laws and is jealously watchful to ensure that not even the least law is broken. He stands there constantly with the facial expression of a teacher, and with whip in hand. This is unworthy of God. I don't want to prove it, just clarify and explain.

Secondly, things would lose their autonomy. Think of the trees, the plants, the animals and human beings. All these things would lose their autonomy if extreme justice were the world's fundamental law.

Thirdly, allow me to remind you of the great danger to which humankind has fallen prey for centuries. If God stands there and wants to educate human beings to be morally autonomous, so that they have a sound character and become profoundly mature personalities, we can accept it. But if this is exaggerated, as happens in literature, the danger is great that God will be forbidden to govern the world. He will be manoeuvred into a corner. Stay there, we have our own laws and we want to draw them up ourselves.²⁸

That is why we don't want to let go of love.

I know that I have merely touched on the problems, but I don't need to do more than that. What is love? The world's fundamental law. Justice, or God's will to design and form, are not the ultimate motives; the ultimate and deepest motive for world events, for all redemption, for the government of the world, is God's love. Love inspires God's justice and his will to design and form.

Do you know why we have to pay such careful heed to these matters? It is because of the problems of our present times. We can forget about God's will to design and form; we aren't struggling for that. The problem of our present times is this: Is God primarily a just or a benevolent God? We have to immunise our people today against the morbid tendencies of our time. That is why we

²⁷ Immanuel Kant (22 April 1724 - 12 February 1804) was an 18th-century German philosopher from the Prussian city of Königsberg. Kant was the last influential philosopher of modern Europe in the classic sequence of the theory of knowledge during the Enlightenment.

²⁸ This way of looking at God is called deism.

have to look for the reason underlying all dogma and philosophy. We have to create a contrary intellectual movement. We can't answer one mass movement with another; we have to create spiritual currents. In order to do this we have to reorientate ourselves, acquire a different feeling for life, and struggle to create other forms.

So, I see the ultimate and deepest motive in God as the world's fundamental law. Everything that God does – war, revolution, everything we know – the ultimate motive is love. I think of myself. Where is the suffering that threatens to oppress me? The blows of fate – where do they ultimately come from? We may not immediately think of practical things. At present we have only to convince ourselves that God's love is really the world's fundamental law. What is the effect? If I am convinced of this, I have the solution to all riddles. If I have only grasped it as an idea, my inner life will not resonate.

There you have the first part: Everything out of love.

The Second Part: Everything for love – *causa finalis*.²⁹ What is God's purpose with all that he does and allows, with the way he has created the world, with the way he governs it? Everything aims at loving union with him! You will notice that we are struggling for a consistent approach. Others would say: For the glorification of God!³⁰ Here you find the world's fundamental law followed up clearly and consistently. Love is the beginning, love is the middle, and love is the end. God's goal is loving union with us! He loves himself and wants to unite himself to us in love. That is to say, if I am united in love with God, it is for him the greatest honour and for me the greatest bliss. We have to think everything through from the point-of-view of love. Everything for our profound and penetrating union of love with him; for his union in love with us.

The Third Part: Everything through love. How does God want to bring us to this profound and loving union with himself? Through proofs of his love, through vivid, tangible, large and gigantic proofs of his love. Please notice that the content of the word 'love', depending on how it is used, is given a different emphasis.

The divine aspect of the world's fundamental law: Everything out of love, everything through love, everything for love. We can see the powerful stream of love.

Now let us take a look at the human aspect of the world's fundamental law. If the world's fundamental law places an obligation on God, it must also place an obligation on me. How must I think and love? Also in my life I have constantly to see the triad before me: Everything out of love, everything through love, everything for love.

Everything out of love! The main motivation for all I do is God's love. The main motivation! However, this does not exclude that other motives are also at work. The fear of God can resonate: God is the Just One. Gratitude to God: God is also the great Creator who has poured out his blessings upon me. Yet you need to consider that if what I have formulated as the 'world's fundamental law' is true, I have to apply it not just in theory, but also in practice in my life. The central motivation has to be God's love. That is the dominant motive. Everything else has to recede more or less into the background. It may be present, but it may not be the central motive.

²⁹ Final cause.

³⁰ Cf. the Benedictine motto: "*Ut in omnibus glorificetur Deus* – so that God may be glorified in everything" (1 Pet 4,11); and the Jesuit motto: "*Omnia ad maiorem Dei gloriam* – Everything for the greater honour and glory of God".

Wouldn't you like to look into your own lives and ask yourselves: Is God and love for God really the main motivation in all I do in my life? If you agree, I will give you the brusque answer: I don't believe that you know many striving people who can say with certainty: In my life love is the central motivation.

If you will allow me to use some very harsh expressions – and I think you must do so, because what matters to me is that our whole feeling for life is more strongly reshaped as time goes by – I will have to say: What am I in my relationship to God? I am God's creation, God's child, God's slave. Please don't take it amiss if, in order to heighten what has been said, I use an even harsher expression: I am God's dog! What is the attitude of Christians today towards God? Don't the majority, even of striving Christians – perhaps we won't even be able to exclude ourselves – live as though the world's fundamental law is justice? You will have to pause here for quite some time and not just say yes or no. You will have to question your experiences with all the people you have come to know. Don't they live in practice, even if they talk in different terms, as though justice is the world's fundamental law? In my own life, isn't the fear of God the world's fundamental law? Please note the scale of expressions: God's child, God's creature, God's slave, God's dog. How many people today feel as though they have been treated and beaten by God like a dog? Go through the ranks of the Faithful. May I give you a few suggestions for your reflections, for your review?

Look into the lives of our children. Why is it that so incredibly many of our teachers and educators, who can no longer make any progress and stand helplessly before the children, know of no better means than to show God as the person who will beat them up, the hound of heaven? Isn't everyday life like this if we have been at all educated in a religious sense? In many areas and families it simply doesn't happen that children are educated [in a religious sense]. But when it happens, how often the parents threaten their children with the "wow wow" God when they can no longer achieve their aim? You need to consider these things calmly, because our aim is not just that we ourselves are inwardly transformed, but to see before us the great task to create an ideal state according to the words of St Augustine: *Utamur haereticis...*³¹ What does God want of us? To immunise us against the heresies of our times.

What is the reason for these phenomena? I want to mention a psychological and a theological reason.

The psychological reason. Perhaps we have all fallen prey to the heresy, and accept that the essential original instinct in human nature is fear. In contrast to this I am stating – and that is the essential consequence of the world's fundamental law – that the essential original instinct in human nature is not fear, but love. I may think that if I have taken hold of someone by fear, I have that person. That isn't true! The original human instinct is love. And since we feed upon the idea: If people are afraid, I will have them in my grasp – we also act accordingly. The original instinct is not fear, but love.

Where is the theological reason for so many parents treating their children in this way? It is because they have a false idea of the Father, a false idea of God. Where is the mistake? In their opinion the world's fundamental law is justice, not love.

³¹ Make use of the heretics ... in order to work out the true teaching all the more clearly.

Do you notice how important our discussion is? We simply cannot deny it. We may not say: we want to love God a little bit – no, we have to transform our feeling for life and in this way help our people to change their opinion on many things, so that they are enabled to overcome the heresies of our times from within, and in this way master life.

A few more hints, which could easily be multiplied. In many periods of our lives, and to a great extent perhaps also still today – have we not had the attitude: If God sent me some sort of suffering, the first question we asked, if we hadn't become apathetic, was: What have I done to deserve that? What resonates in the background? The world's fundamental law of justice. He stands way up there, our just God, now he has me in his clutches again, and can whip me as much as he likes. Although this may not apply exactly as I have put it for some individuals, it is the general direction.

Or, if we have a sensitive conscience and have failed or sinned: Why is that that seriously striving people who have sinned, or failed, have a breakdown that lasts months and even years? They lie in the corner and can no longer breathe. Why is that? How much of this attitude is hidden in our hearts! For a time this is sound, but if it lasts too long, then, whether we are conscious of it or not, our ingrained conviction is that from God's point-of-view the world's fundamental law is justice; from our point-of-view it is the fear of God. We can't rise upwards, we remain stuck down there.

When we look back on the first part we know: Whoever trembles in dog-like fear before God for so long will try to gain self-confirmation through achievements and success. It seems to me that through the present-day heresies God wants us to acquire a clear and pure concept of God once more. The issue at present is to see God's will quickly. Ranting and raving won't solve the problems – we can do this when we are alone. But in addition we have to work together, especially at conferences! What can we do? We aren't helpless in the face of the world. We have only to listen and discover what God wants. God wants us to understand him more rationally, so that all of us together can grow into the great fundamental law of the world, which is God's love.

When we have been to confession, how often the idea comes into our minds: Have my sins been forgiven? Where does it come from? It can appear temporarily, but if someone with a religious nature does not get beyond it, and repeatedly confesses the same things, doesn't it mean that they are convinced, they have experienced, it has become part of them, that from God's point-of-view the world's fundamental law is justice, and from their point-of-view it is fear?

Where does this come from?

The psychological reason. It could be that it is someone's natural disposition. However, the psychological reason indicates that in most instances this disposition is extraordinarily strengthened if there has been a one-sided experience with one's own father. I really must ask you to examine your own pastoral experiences: when you give talks, when you are in the confessional, or when you conduct retreats or missions, and you have people before you who cannot get beyond seeing God as the strict judge; if you have people before you who can do nothing with the idea of God the Father.

Please remember that the difficulties in our present times are usually based in the emotions; they are in the heart, not the mind. People don't have a false idea of the Father, but a false experience of what a father is. What does that mean? Young people are like tender plants, and when, through their father's extremely harsh handling, their concept of the Father takes on this colouring, it is extremely difficult later on to change the dark colouring of their experience of fatherhood, and

transform their primary image of the just Father to become that of the kind and loving Father. Unless we consciously adjust our entire education of the people in this direction, we will only succeed in a very few instances.

And the theological reason? Our one-sided concept of the Father. We will have to do an enormous amount of work, even in ourselves, and even more in the people, before we have again adjusted ourselves to become aware that the world's fundamental law is love! That is God the Father! Do not be afraid that this will lead to a wimpish concept of God. If God's central motivation is love, it also means that I may be shy of him, but it may not be a dog-like shyness.

Let me summarise. I deliberately want to put it somewhat harshly: What is very often our idea of God? We see God as the awesome majesty, as the *Deus tremendae maiestatis*, the terrible God who snorts with anger, accompanied by thunder and lightning on Sion, whose only aim is to draw up laws, and who watches over us to ensure that they are carried out in every detail. Woe if they aren't fulfilled to the least detail! He then turns a cold shoulder, casting his people from him. Think only of how we often live. The least fault and we again become aware: God doesn't love me any more! This is all the more true of the members of religious communities! They have a really hard time with Almighty God. He isn't satisfied with the usual laws, he has thought up a whole world of minute laws, and woe if they don't keep them, woe is them; what can still happen to them! And if they manage to evade him here on earth, he will get them in eternity and send them to purgatory, or to hell. But we can go to confession! But is it true? So they confess again and again!

That has been put harshly, but isn't our religious feeling for life geared in this direction?

Don't we have a great task in this regard? This is how we have to see our task for our times and our own transformation, which has to be given to us. Don't just talk politics or grouse about things! Let us lead our people to an understanding of God that he has laid down in the Sacred Scriptures and requires of them because of the circumstances of our times.

There you have one part, the one human aspect: Everything out of love!

Secondly, everything for love. I have to avoid everything and do everything to arrive at a profound and fervent union of love with God, here on earth and finally up there in the *visio beata*.

Thirdly, everything through love. How am I to achieve this? By means of a strong movement of love. How will I enter more deeply into a fervent love for God, so that all that I do is constantly borne by love, not so much by justice? Look at the people who make laws for themselves, or who have been given laws, and who are in a religious community! Do you know such people – if I may put it crassly – who have only one task in life: To observe rules all day? This has a deep meaning, but only in a context. Life consists of more than a justice that says: This is prescribed! In the background there has to be the central motive of love. Love helps me to carry out the prescribed points out of love. I am not saying "self-love", and then act out of another motive. Love urges us and inspires justice, fear, dependence. You realise what I am trying to say: the world's fundamental law.

This is how we see the world's fundamental law in the general introduction. The divine aspect: Everything out of love, everything through love, everything for love! The human aspect: Everything out of love, everything through love, everything for love!

Other sayings that express the divine aspect in more popular terms are: God is Father, God is good, everything he does is good. That is the world's fundamental law from God's point-of-view. If we manage one thing: to convince our people and ourselves in a very profound way of this truth, then the blows of fate can rain down on us, we will be immunised against them. God is Father, God is good, everything he does is good.

What about the human aspect? Let me use a Pauline expression: For those who love God, everything works out for the best.³² If that is correct, it means that in our present serious times I have to do only one thing – to love God.

Take some other expression. There is a saying of St Francis de Sales. On one occasion he remarked: In the Church everything happens out of love, everything through love, everything for love.³³

Or, again in another form, but more from the human aspect: As the body is there for the soul, so the soul is there for love.³⁴ Do you know what that means? The most basic instinct of my soul is love. The gravitational force of my soul is love.³⁵ Once you have grasped the thought clearly: The most basic and original instinct is not fear, but love, I can guarantee that your whole pastoral work will be revolutionised.

That should be enough. We have been introduced to the general outlines of the world's fundamental law, God's love. But please don't forget to pray to see these things clearly. Also pray that our feeling for life is somewhat transformed, because we are all gripped more than we are aware by another form of life. If our feeling for life has been transformed, we will find it easier to proclaim the good news from God in a more God-pleasing way.

³² Ro 8,28: We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

³³ "In holy Church all is by love, in love, for love and out of love" (*Treatise on the Love of God*, Vol. 1, Tan Books, Illinois, 1975, Preface, p. 38.).

³⁴ Cf. *ibid*, Vol. II "Just as our soul, which although it gives life to the body, doesn't originate from it, because by virtue of God's natural providence it has been infused into our bodies, so the love that gives life to our hearts does not come from them, but pours into our hearts as a heavenly gift." "Yet if the soul together with its body is a world in miniature, so love is the sun that adorns everything, warms everything and gives life to everything."

³⁵ Cf. Augustine, *Confessions* XIII, 9, p.317, "In my case love is the weight by which I act" (Penguin Classics 1977).