

“If you do not fight...”

Joy is a Christian possession which we will have as long as we keep fighting, for it is a consequence of peace. Peace is the fruit of having conquered in war, and the life of man upon this earth - as we read in Sacred Scripture - is a warfare. (The Forge, 105)

1 April

The entire tradition of the Church has described Christians as *milites Christi*: soldiers of Christ. Soldiers

who bring serenity to others while continually fighting against their own bad inclinations. Sometimes because we are short on supernatural outlook, in effect short on faith, we do not want to hear any talk of life on earth as a kind of war. We maliciously insinuate that if we think of ourselves as *milites Christi*, there is a danger that we might use the faith for earthly purposes, bringing pressure to bear, creating little isolated groups. This very naive line of thought is completely illogical and usually goes hand in hand with cowardice and love of comfort.

There is nothing further from the christian faith than fanaticism — that unholy alliance of the sacred and the profane, whatever guise it takes. That danger just does not exist if we understand our struggle as Christ has taught us to: as a war each of us makes on himself. It is a constantly renewed effort to love

God better, to root out selfishness, to serve all men. Turning your back on this conflict, no matter what the excuse, means surrendering before you have begun to fight. Anyone who does so is brought low, without faith, depressed in his heart, blown this way and that by miserable pleasures.

Our spiritual combat in the presence of God and of all our brothers in the faith is a necessary result of being a Christian. So if you do not fight, you are betraying Jesus Christ and the whole Church, his mystical body.
(Christ is passing by, 74)