

# Reflections

Father Nicolas Schwizer

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## Healthily Rooted to Things

Do you know the conversation of the little prince with the fox? “My life,” says the fox to the little prince, “is very monotonous: I hunt for chickens and men hunt for me. All chickens and all men are the same, thus I am constantly bored.

If you tame (domesticate) me, my life will be filled with sunshine and I will know the rustling of some steps different from others. The other steps will make me hide under the earth, yours, like music, will call me out of the burrow.....” The fox got quiet and looked at the little prince for a good while. “Please tame (domesticate) me,” he told him.

“I would really like to,” responded the little prince, “but I don’t have much time. I have to find friends and get to know many things.”

“You can only know things well if you tame (domesticate) them,” said the fox. “Men do not have time to know anything. They buy everything already made in the stores. And since there are no stores where friends are sold, men no longer have friends. If you want a friend, tame (domesticate) me!”

This text is sufficiently eloquent for us to have an idea about being rooted to things. It also shows us that modern man – living among things and using them – ignores the personal attachment to them. We are like tourists accumulating things without them enriching us interiorly. And this tendency still intensifies itself by our society of consumption.

So then, how should there be a healthy rootedness in material things? First, we must understand that things not only have their own value, but also have a symbolic meaning. They are like small prophets of God. They bring us the Good News of God, of his attributes and of his proposals. Through them, God shows us his wishes, his Presence and introduces us into his Father Heart.

Our task consists in interpreting this prophet voice of things; to know how to listen and to understand what they tell us of their creator. That allows us to be deeply rooted in the things which surround us.

We must walk through this world with our eyes open, listen to the invitations from creation: the spectacles of nature, for example, the mysterious immensity of the ocean, the greatness of the mountain ranges, the silence of the forests, but also the marvels of culture, art and technology. It is all like a canticle of praise and gratitude to the Creator.

And it invites us – men – to offer this hymn to God in the name of all creation. It invites us to raise our voices of praise to all the inanimate creation. Only in this way will things root us in God, they will be a bridge of union to HIM and their true mission will be fulfilled in us.

But we are still lacking an essential element to have a healthy and balanced rootedness in the things and goods of this world. We know that the danger exists of being too rooted in things, that we become slaves to things. I believe it happens to all of us that we do not feel completely free with some things; for example, the cigarette, the new car we desire, our material goods.

A healthy attachment to things means, therefore, to also know how to detach, to know how to renounce them. We should protect ourselves from the excessive esteem to earthly things, we are not absolute owners, only administrators of the goods which God has given us. They serve us as a useful means to fulfill our life mission.

We should have the strength and the inner freedom to know how to renounce the superfluous goods of this earth for love of God and mankind. Only in this way will we be able to surrender ourselves to the true values and ideals of our life as Christians.

Dear brothers and sisters, may the Blessed Virgin and her Son Jesus give us the grace of a harmonious rootedness to things – rootedness which know how to interpret them, to enjoy them and to dominate them, but also to renounce them if necessary.

Original Spanish: Translation: Carlos Cantú, Schoenstatt Family Federation, Austin, Texas USA [cantu\\_carlos@hotmail.com](mailto:cantu_carlos@hotmail.com) 07042019