



LA LUMIÈRE

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Serving with Campus Crusade
for Christ in Toulouse France

Celle-ci était la véritable lumière, celle qui, en venant dans le monde, éclaire tout être humain.

John 1:9

Un BURSTING OUR BUBBLE

"Wouldn't it be neat if we doubled our number for our second discussion soiree?" A prayer quickly followed: Lord, may we have twice as many at *Café à Bulle* tonight. There were 16, exactly twice the number of the first! The next day, the student who'd requested the room for us received a summons from the Hall Director. He claimed there were complaints from students because he allowed a Christian group to meet on campus. *Café à Bulle* lost its location.

"We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down but not destroyed--" 2 Cor 4:8,9

It is a blow from the enemy, a clear reminder of the fierceness of the spiritual battle in which we're engaged. Yet God is with us and He is never conquered! We continue to depend on Him and pray that His will be done.

Deux CELEBRATING THE INCARNATION

Along with the regulars, there were five new students at our Christmas party! Our favorite café hosted the festivities with cakes, crêpes and drinks. We played Pictionary and asked questions like "What represents Christmas for you?" and "In your opinion, what does Santa do the other days of the year?" To present the idea of the Divine Incarnation, we borrowed a story from Paul Harvey, "The Man and the Birds" – a modern day Christmas parable. Everyone who came heard why God became man and lived among us. You too can enjoy the story on page two.

Trois A NEW CHILD OF GOD

It happened during a Bible study.

Eric, a non-Christian who wants to learn more about Christianity, was talking with Gilles, who Dan spent much time with last year discussing the Gospel. "Are you a Christian?" Eric asked Gilles. "Yes," Gilles answered. Dan was so

shocked that he asked them both to repeat what they'd said to be sure he'd understood. Dan later asked Gilles what being a Christian meant to him, whether he'd made the decision they had talked about so often. Again his answer was yes. Quiet Gilles has accepted Christ! Praise God who steadily and tenderly brings people into relationship with Himself! Dan will now be investing time with Gilles so he can grow into a disciple of Christ.

Quatre THE NEW YEARS CAMP

So what drew us to the Alps in the middle of winter? Unfortunately there was very little snow, but there were 112 students and staff from all over France at our New Years Camp! We personally helped organize the camp this year; Dan designed the publicity and May was on the planning committee. Students were challenged to finish well. They were asked to examine what they wanted to be at the end of their life and evaluate whether the life path they are currently following will take them to that goal. There was a speaker, discussion groups, workshops, worship, and of course – beautiful scenery. How wonderful to be in the mountains again! It is also encouraging to see such a large group of vibrant, Christian French students!

Please pray...

- For a new location for our discussion soiree – *Café à Bulle*
- For Gilles to grow in his newborn faith!
- For the preparations for the group of students who will visit from the US during spring break to gain vision for ministry in France

The Lord's blessings to you!
Dan, May and Silas

The Man and the Birds

Narrated by Paul Harvey

Unable to trace its proper parentage, I have designated this as my Christmas Story of the Man and the Birds.

You know, THE Christmas Story, God born a man in a manger and all that escapes some moderns, mostly, I think, because they seek complex answers to their questions and this one is so utterly simple. So for the cynics and the skeptics and the unconvinced I submit a modern parable.

Now the man to whom I'm going to introduce you was not a scrooge, he was a kind, decent, mostly good man. Generous to his family, upright in his dealings with other men. But he just didn't believe all that incarnation stuff which the churches proclaim at Christmas Time. It just didn't make sense and he was too honest to pretend otherwise. He just couldn't swallow the Jesus Story, about God coming to Earth as a man.

"I'm truly sorry to distress you," he told his wife, "but I'm not going with you to church this Christmas Eve." He said he'd feel like a hypocrite. That he'd much rather just stay at home, but that he would wait up for them. And so he stayed and they went to the midnight service.

Shortly after the family drove away in the car, snow began to fall. He went to the window to watch the flurries getting heavier and heavier and then went back to his fireside chair and began to read his newspaper. Minutes later he was startled by a thudding sound. Then another, and then another. Sort of a thump or a thud. At first he thought someone must be throwing snowballs against his living room window.

But when he went to the front door to investigate he found a flock of birds huddled miserably in the snow. They'd been caught in the storm and, in a desperate search for shelter, had tried to fly through his large landscape window. Well, he couldn't let the poor creatures lie there and freeze, so he remembered the barn where his children stabled their pony. That

would provide a warm shelter, if he could direct the birds to it.

Quickly he put on a coat, galoshes, tramped through the deepening snow to the barn. He opened the doors wide and turned on a light, but the birds did not come in. He figured food would entice them in. So he hurried back to the house, fetched bread crumbs, sprinkled them on the snow, making a trail to the yellow-lighted wide open doorway of the stable. But to his dismay, the birds ignored the bread crumbs, and continued to flap around helplessly in the snow.

He tried catching them. He tried shooing them into the barn by walking around them waving his arms. Instead, they scattered in every direction, except into the warm, lighted barn. And then, he realized, that they were afraid of him. To them, he reasoned, I am a strange and terrifying creature. If only I could think of some way to let them know that they can trust me.

That I am not trying to hurt them, but to help them. But how? Because any move he made tended to frighten them, confuse them. They just would not follow. They would not be led or shooed because they feared him.

"If only I could be a bird," he thought to himself, "and mingle with them and speak their language. Then I could tell them not to be afraid. Then I could show them the way to safe, warm ... to the safe warm barn. But I would have to be one of them so they could see, and hear and understand."

At that moment the church bells began to ring. The sound reached his ears above the sounds of the wind. And he stood there listening to the bells - *Adeste Fidelis* - listening to the bells pealing the glad tidings of Christmas. And he sank to his knees in the snow.