Picture yourself being born, coming out of your mother's womb at the age you are now at this very moment in terms of your development and consciousness. What would be the first, absolutely your initial reaction? If I were to open my eyes for the first time in this instant, emerging from my mother's womb, I would be overpowered by the wonder and awe of things as a “presence.”

BOWLED OVER. I would be bowled over and amazed by the stupefying repercussion of a presence which is expressed in current language by the word “thing.” Things! That’s “something!” “Thing,” which is a concrete and, if you please, banal version of the word “being.” Being: not as some abstract entity, but as presence, a presence which I do not myself make, which I find. A presence which imposes itself upon me. At this moment, if I am attentive, that is, if I am mature, then I cannot deny that the greatest and most profound evidence is that I do not make myself, I am not making myself. I do not give myself being, or the reality which I am. I am “given.” This is the moment of maturity when I discover myself to be dependent upon something else.

With every morning joy reawakens within me.
Luigi Giussani

IN THE “IMPACT” WITH THE REAL. There is an experience, hidden yet implied, of that arcane, mysterious presence to be found within the opening of the eye, within the attraction reawakened by things, within the beauty of things, within an amazement, full of gratitude, comfort, and hope, how can this complex, yet simple, this enormously rich experience of the human heart—which is the heart of the human person–how can it become vivid? How can it become powerful? In the “impact” with the real. The only condition for being truly and faithfully religious, is to live always the real intensely, the formula for the journey to the meaning of reality is to live always the real without preclusion, without negating or forgetting anything.

(The religious sense, Montreal-London 1997)

Eternal mystery of our being. Human nature, if you’re merely weak and worthless, dust and shadow, why aspire so high?

G. Leopardi