

TOGETHER!

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The Symphony of Faith



There is no melody without a variety of notes, no painting without different colours, no sketch without lines, no beauty without various shapes, no words without a sound, no books without pages, no time without rhythm, no waves without movement, no sun without light, no harmony without a system, not a "whole" without the "partial".

Likewise, there is no Church without the baptized, no humanity without the persons, no human being without a face, no society without a community, no cities without inhabitants, no state without citizens and no Christians without Christ.

The parish is the heart and the meeting place of man with the Incarnate

Word of God!

The parish is a microcosm of the melody of faith's symphony, of the human vocation's beauty, of the divine glory, of God's plan, of the continual rhythm of human work and activity, of the comings and goings of human sin and regret, of sinning and repentance, of human effort and divine grace.

The parish is but a community of the citizens of heaven, who receive their life and movement from the Holy Spirit.

No one is ever alone.

No one is ever forgotten, no one is ever ignored.

All support each other, all pray for each other, and together they are a light for the world and the call of salvation towards all and everyone.

On this rock I will build my Church

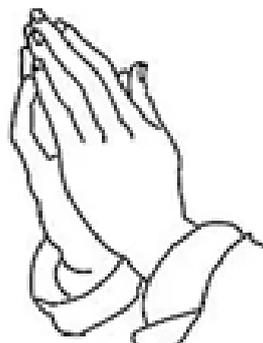
«You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

(Mt. 16. 18-19)

The Roman Pontiff, as the successor of Peter, is the perpetual and visible principle and foundation of unity of both the bishops and of the faithful

Lumen Gentium, ch.III, §23



The living cell of the Church

At the beginning of the Christian era the parish was not distinct from the area of the jurisdiction of the Bishop (bishopric).

However, that soon changed, due to the rapid growth of the Christian faith.

The Bishops needed more presbyters (priests) to help them in their pastoral work, so they created several parishes under their jurisdiction within and without the geographical borders of their territory.

This system is still followed in our days.

The parish is the "living cell" of the Church, and it is within the parish that normally take place the genesis, increase and spreading of the faith and the spiritual life of its members, as well as its influence further afield into the society and the world at large.

The Church is Christ's body, the fullness of Him who fills everything in every way (Eph. 1, 23).

Let us, therefore, love our parish and those in it who labour for us.

And, in our turn, let us offer whatever we are able to, for the good of others, thanking God for his bountiful goods, talents and possibilities He gives us, so as to get to know Him better and to love Him more,

Music and the soul

"One of the best supports for the spiritual life is the liturgical chant: it uplifts the soul and unites all the members of the community in the very same harmony.

The music, being a mirror of the harmony of the celestial spheres and the angelic choirs, is the highest form of human activity, since the soul is symphonic: as the speech outlines the body, so music manifests the spirit...

Man's dignity is revealed through divine praise, for in this way man participates in the angelic lives".

The above are sayings of Hildegard von Bingen, who "did not compose", but simply noted down the melodies she heard during her visions.

Her musical creations, in reality, is a synthesis of all her experiences; she establishes a subtle correspondence between the Word and the soul and she places man in tune with the Mystery.

Her music, reminiscent of the Gregorian chant, goes beyond the rules of composition of the time by its liberty, variety of rhythm and especially the correspondence of the music with the text.

The words are interlaced, in continuous flux, never immobile, enchanting the listener by its fluidity and power.

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Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179) was canonized in 2012 by Pope Benedict XVI and declared Doctor of the Church. Her memory is celebrated on 17th September.



Did you know...

The word **parish** defines a particular geographical area where a **parish priest** has been given charge of the faithful by his **bishop**.

The word is derived from the Greek **paroikia** (παροικία) i.e. from **παρά + οικία, para (=beside) + oikia (=house)**, meaning transitory sojourn.

It reflects well what Saint Peter says: "Beloved, as **foreigners (paroikoi)** and exiles, I urge you to abstain from the desires of the flesh which wage war against your soul" (1 Pet. 2, 11).

Indeed, each parish gathers in it all the people of God who live in its territory, in order to help them fulfill their duties towards God. These are: Praising God, proclaiming the Good News and serving the needy.

So, the celebration of the **Sacraments**, the teaching of the **Doctrine of Faith** and works of **Charity** are the indispensable and essential tasks of the parish.

The **lay faithful** have an increasingly important role to play by assisting the parish priest through their various talents and aptitudes.

The parish is the concrete presence of Christ in situ, so to speak.

Love relationship



The miniature above is made under Saint Hildegard's von Bingen instructions, in the 12th century, and represents the angelic choirs arranged in nine homocentric circles around the Godhead.

It shows the nine angelic orders.

Humanity has been called to participate in the angelic praise through our Saviour Jesus Christ, taking part in the celestial liturgy and "completing it", so to speak.

Saint Augustin writes in his "City of God":

"Human history will cease when all the places left vacant by the bad angels' fall will be filled by the saints in Christ".

Certainly, no-one is in a position to know such "details" of the Divine plan.

What we do know, however, and with the utmost certainty, is the infinite charity and mercy of God, who through His Church, is calling all of us into a never-ending relationship of love with Himself, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Ode to Autumn

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cell.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers;
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir, the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

John Keats, (1795-1821)

Interfaith half-Marathon



On Sunday 17 September an interfaith half-Marathon in Rome will see thousands of runners following a course between buildings that symbolically represent the crossroads of different cultures and peoples.

The first ever '**Via Pacis' (Way of Peace)** race links St Peter's Square, (the square was first built in the 16th century), the Great Synagogue, The Grand Mosque, (the biggest in Europe, with a capacity to hold up to 12,000 people), the Greek Orthodox Church of St Theodore, a building dating from the 6th century, and the city's Waldensian evangelical church (13th century).

The international event has been organized by the city authorities, the Pontifical council for Culture and the Italian Athletics Federation.