

HERE AND NOW

INFORMATIVE BULLETIN OF THE PAPHOS LATIN PARISH

November 2017

Love relationship for ever

There is a misunderstanding as regards the Christian Faith, namely, that it overlooks the real needs of the people and focuses its attention on to a nebulous future promised world, thus encouraging the faithful to passivity and non-realism.

Nothing is further from the truth!

From its very beginnings, the Church turned with particular love, her attention to the poor, the suffering and the weak.

In every page of the Gospel we are confronted with the words and deeds of the Lord Jesus, whose centre and horizon is always the same: love! Love for God and love of the neighbour.

The aim of Christian life is, consistent with the Saviour's example, twofold: a relationship of love with God, and a relationship of love with our fellow man/woman.

The expressions of this love are innumerable. All of them aim to ameliorate life **here and now!**

The dynamism of this love, however, is maintained and strengthened through Faith.

We believe that every person's existence as well as that of the whole human race is not limited to this earthly sphere, but extends well beyond to the spiritual and eternal.

It is Faith in the Incarnation of God, in the person of Jesus Christ, which pushes forward and lifts up the Christians' efforts for a better life here and now—for the kingdom of God has already started upon earth.

We have the certainty of moving on towards a continual and endless relationship of love with God and with all those who love Him; a relationship which is carried on beyond this earth, beyond this limited visible world.



Life in the first community

They devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the Apostles.

All the believers were together and had everything in common.

Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.

(Acts of the Apostles, ch. 2, 42-45)

The love that moves the world



Pope Francis speaking with the crew of ISS, 26 / 10 /2017

On 26 Oct. 2017 at 4pm Cyprus time, the Holy Father held a live interview with the crew of the **International Space Station, ISS**.

The tableau above the Pontiff is inspired by Dante's Divine Comedy and is entitled "the love which moves the universe".

An appropriate theme for the six astronauts who are orbiting the earth at a speed of 10 km / second and at a distance of 400 km.

The astronauts — three American, two Russian and an Italian— evidently moved, held a relaxed conversation with the Holy Father, who asked them quite a few questions regarding their profession.

At the end, he assured them of his prayers for them and asked them to, also, pray for him.

The Divine Comedy

Dante Alighieri's (1265-1321) Divine Comedy is one of the most significant works of World Literature.

The poet, who wrote in Italian and is considered **the father of the Italian language**, describes in an epic trilogy his travels through Hell, Purgatory and, finally, Paradise, where he meets again with Beatrice, a girl whom he loved and who became his lifelong inspiration.

His work is not only a linguistic and poetic masterpiece, but it is, also, imbued with the Catholic faith and the Catholic way of viewing the world.

"The love which moves the universe" is referred to in the first and last "songs" of "Paradise".

There are excellent English translations of the Divine Comedy and it is very worthwhile to enrich our library with this classic work of our Catholic and world heritage.



Did you know...

The number of Catholics in the world is increasing: almost 1.3 billion, 17.7 percent of the world's population, reported Agenzia Fides on October 20, 2017. Agenzia Fides is the information service of the Pontifical Mission Societies.

According to figures from the Church's Book of Statistics (data related to 2015) the baptized are 12.5 million more than the previous year (2014).

A few statistics of interest:

Africa has 222 million Catholics, 19.42 percent of the population.

The Americas have 635 million Catholics, 63.6 percent of the population.

Europe has 285 million Catholics, 39.87 percent of the population.

Asia has 141 million Catholic, 3.24 percent of the population.

The Catholic Church runs 216,548 schools in the world, attended by more than 60 million pupils.

There are about 118,000 Catholic social and charitable institutes (hospitals, care homes for people with leprosy, orphanages, homes for the elderly) scattered throughout the world.

A fleeting moment



This is how Pope Francis referred to the earth, after a comment by one of the astronauts, who stressed that our planet looks most beautiful from space, with no frontiers, in a serene world and with a very thin atmosphere which reveals its great fragility.

In conditions of non-gravity, in order to navigate inside the space station, the astronauts said that they have to themselves decide where it is "up" or "down", to which the Holy Father observed that it is **a human characteristic to have the capacity to decide** where it is "up", therefore to define his microcosm i.e. his own system of reference.



One of the Russian crew explained that he followed his profession because of his grandfather, who was an engineer involved in the Soyuz project, the first ever satellite which orbited the earth; another said he liked the book "the Little Prince" and the giving one's life for the others.

The Pontiff emphasized that our decisions are always influenced by our human roots as well as by our desire for God, who actually is our destiny.

Paradiso Canto I: 1-36 Dante's Invocation

The love of Him, who moves all things, penetrates the universe, and glows in one region more, in another less. I have been in that Heaven that knows his light most, and have seen things, which whoever descends from there has neither power, nor knowledge, to relate: because as our intellect draws near to its desire, it reaches such depths that memory cannot go back along the track.

Nevertheless, whatever, of the sacred regions, I had power to treasure in my mind, will now be the subject of my labour.

O good Apollo, for the final effort, make me such a vessel of your genius, as you demand for the gift of your beloved laurel. Till now, one peak of Parnassus was enough, but now inspired by both I must enter this remaining ring. Enter my chest, and breathe, as you did when you drew Marsyas out of the sheath that covered his limbs.

O Divine Virtue if you lend me your help, so that I can reveal that shadow of the kingdom of the Blessed, stamped on my brain, you will see me come to your chosen bough, and there crown myself with the leaves, that you, and the subject, will make me worthy of. Father, they are gathered, infrequently from it, for a Caesar's or a Poet's Triumph, through the fault, and to the shame, of human will: so the leaves of Daphne's tree, the Peneian frond, should light joy in the joyful Delphic god, when it makes someone long for them. A great flame follows a tiny spark: perhaps, after me, better voices will pray, and Parnassus will respond.

Hail, holy Queen

ANT.
S Al-ve, *Re-gi-na, Mater mi-se-re-cordi-as: Vi-ta, dul-ci-do, et spes nostra, sal-ve. Ad te cla-ma-mus, éu-lei, fi-li-i Hevæ. Ad te suspi-ci-as, gemitus et fletus in hac lacrima-rum valle. E-in-ter-geo, Advo-ca-ta nostra, il-lu-sa-tes mi-se-re-cór-des ó-cu-los ad nos convé-te. Et Je-su-m, bene-di-ctam fructus vestris tu-til, no-bis post hoc ex-i-li-um ostéde: O cle-mens: O pi-a: O dulcis

a Quadagesima vespæ ad Pascha Resurrectionis ecclesiæ, quæ canitur Feria VI in Parasceve.

* Virgo Ma-ri-a.

*Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy,
Our life, our sweetness, and our hope.*

*To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve
To thee do we send up our sighs,
Mourning and weeping in this vale of tears.
Turn then, O most gracious Advocate,
Thine eyes of mercy towards us.*

*And after this, our exile,
Show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus.*

*O clement! O loving!
O sweet Virgin Mary*