

WISDOM, SCIENCE AND INTELLECT

The testimony of a researcher (part 2 of 2)

(...) I work in the field of neuroscience applied to communication and I have always been fascinated by the study of the brain. It is the most complex organ we know and it is the result of millions of years of evolution. However, even today, despite the great steps taken by science, the Nobel prizes won, it is not possible to understand why man is often so irrational and illogical, in his behaviour and choices. Science helps a lot in this, but still hasn't provided a clear answer.

I am daily in touch with many realities, from young university students, to professors, to large work tables around which people who hold roles of great responsibility in national and international companies sit. And it is in each of these contexts that I try to testify to the seriousness and commitment of a job aimed at bringing the added value that serves to elevate human dignity. And, working in the field of neuroscience and communication, all this is not always easy, especially when clashing with commonplaces. But when you work according to the truth and justice that come from God, with the aim of offering a service to the scientific community and to anyone who comes into contact with it, you are able to transmit values and passion even for a very delicate area of research. It is nice to encourage and transmit young people the passion for science, the enthusi-

asm for research, accompanied by a sense of freedom and responsibility only for what can be useful, within the confines of humanity and ethics.

The true scientist knows that every day he must study to search for the truth (verify his hypotheses), he must add knowledge, because what he learned yesterday, today is no longer enough and will be even less tomorrow. The believing scientist adds to this the daily prayer for the Lord to illumine his mind, to give His Holy Spirit of Wisdom, Science and Intellect, so that any new scientific discovery can be made available to the whole scientific community so that man can be elevated in his dignity as a human being and, marveling at this new knowledge, can rise towards the contemplation of the Truth.

I am also convinced that human reason shows all its strength exactly when it fully realizes its limits. It is the awareness of being able to know through Infinity, but he does not know Infinity. I think of Socrates' famous phrase, *Hoc unum scio, me nihil scire* (I know that I don't know): however much man can think he knows, the things he doesn't know will be increasingly more. However, faced with this thought, having thirst for knowledge is a duty of man. A phrase from the book of Proverbs reads "God has glory in what he conceals, kings have glory in what they fathom" (Pro 25.2).

As a researcher, it is nice to investigate and discover the functioning of the human mind, aware that I can only know what I am allowed to know and, confident that, sharing this knowledge, there will always be someone else, who in turn will add a little more knowledge... explaining everything up to a certain point, for the rest remains only a great and wonderful mystery.

Patrizia Cherubino, PhD, Neuromarketing



In search for God, the gift of ourselves

After having learned of the death of John the Baptist, Jesus withdraws into the desert and crowds immediately come to him to receive all kinds of gifts of good. Having always been seen as an inhospitable and lifeless place, the desert becomes the privileged place of encounter with Christ (St. Ambrose).

In the biblical view, the desert represents the soul's desire and constant search for God, even in life difficulties. It is an inner and outer place of silence, prayer, humility, spiritual elevation and discernment of the will of God. To enter the desert you have to ask the Lord for a daring heart for good, a mind free from prejudices and a very eager spirit for God. Today, one builds this place in which to make his soul rest with difficulty, because growing self-denial and the ability to renounce to personal interests are a constant commitment required to dwell in it. However, contemporary man needs the desert more than anything else, as a spiritual place where he can hear in an authentic and true way the Lord that keeps on manifesting himself.

For whoever still does not fully live faith in God, the desert becomes, as for the apostles, a place where it is not possible to feed the multitude, where Christ cannot intervene with all his power. The solution can only be one: "Leave them, there is nothing we can do for them." Jesus' answer is far beyond the vision of the twelve: "They don't have to go." Divine wisdom

goes past our possibilities, uncertainties and fears. God opens a road in the desert and makes new things sprout, right there where life is practically impossible (cf. Is 43,19). Man is only required to believe in the Word of God which is the promise of life and salvation.

However, the abundance of grace does not authorize the disciples to withdraw from their responsibilities. Jesus entrusts them with the mandate to feed the crowd, precisely through the gift of themselves "Feed them yourselves". Prefigured in the broken and multiplied bread, the Eucharist reminds how important the offering of the personal life to God for the salvation of the world is: "While it nourishes us with Christ, the Eucharist we celebrate gradually also transforms us into the body of Christ and spiritual food for our brothers. Jesus wants to reach all in order to bring God's love to everyone. This is why he makes every believer servant of mercy" (Pope Francis, Audience of 17/08/2016). Love for God becomes credible only to the extent that man manages to be broken for his brothers and sisters, living only by forgiveness and mercy.

May the Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, help us give ever greater space to the patient and authentic search for the will of God, even in the least happy events of life, in order to be merciful servants of God, present in the smallest of our brothers.

Father Salvatore Bilotta

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HE MYSTERY OF CREATION

Reflections starting from the catechetical cycle of H.H. Francis on prayer / 3 (20 May 2020)

Continuing his cycle of catechesis on prayer, Pope Francis dwells on the mystery of creation. The man attracted by the beauty of creation and motivated by the amazement it generates in his heart, allows himself to be questioned and answers all this with a prayer of thanksgiving to God for all the beauty he has created. "The beauty and mystery of Creation generate in the heart of man the first movement that prayer arouses (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2566)".

The author of Psalm 8 just expresses this wonder in his prayer. Contemplating the greatness, the extension and the infinity of heaven he raises his prayer to God, in the form of a question: what plan of love must there be behind this wonder? And not only that: before such greatness and immensity, how small man is!

However, the Pope continues, even if the smallness of man is disproportionate in front of the greatness of creation, Genesis speaks of man as the only creature God himself is pleased with: "he was a very good thing". "The relationship with God is the greatness of man: his enthronement. By nature we are almost nothing, small but by vocation, by call we are the children of the great King!"

However, man is not always in favorable situations, so that the beauty of creation can be observed and therefore arouse amazement and prayer in response. Human existence many times is marked by so much negativity, disease, war, indigence, which influence man and direct him to resignation, discourage-

ment and abandoning himself to a sad and hopeless life. Pope Francis invites to overcome this sad vision of life and to open ourselves to the hope of a joyful life. «Prayer is the first force of hope. You pray and hope grows and it goes on. I would say that prayer opens the door to hope. Hope is there, but with my prayer I open the door".

Prayer understood as hope becomes strength. For those who believe, even when the vicissitudes of history are adverse, prayer has the strength to revive and help believe that the love of God is stronger than all the negative realities of history. With the power of prayer, man overcomes the difficulties his life is facing. Prayer has the strength to illuminate the heart, mind and soul with the light of God; it gives hope for a better future.

Pope Francis invites everyone not to let himself be saddened, but to be all bearers of joy, for life is short and it must be lived in praise: "This life is the gift that God has given us: and it is too short to be consumed in sadness and bitterness. Let praise God, simply happy to exist."

St. Francis of Assisi knew how to see all this, and he translated into prayer and song all the wonder that creation aroused in his heart. His songs, centuries later, arouse in us the same joy and desire to imitate him. Let us also ask the Lord "to make us understand this more and more deeply and lead us to say "thanks": and that "thanks" is a beautiful prayer".

Father Vincenzo Monaci

The
Lord's Day
ROMAN RITE

THEY ALL ATE AND WERE SATISFIED
(XVIII Sunday O.T. Year A)

LISTEN, THAT YOU MAY HAVE LIFE (Is. 55,1-3)

God is water, bread, clothing and home for us. Everything is from him for an infinite gift of his love that knows no bounds. God gives everything, he always gives himself entirely, without any reservation. However, man must accept his invitation, go to his table, enter his home and agree to share his gifts. The door to enter the house of God and taste Him and all his gifts is the word of the covenant. We listen to the word, we live it in its entirety, without adding or removing anything, we enter the house of the Father's heart, we are satisfied with him and all his grace and blessing. Without listening to his word, we are poor, miserable and mean. We are like wayfarers in a desert during a sandstorm. The word listened to is the key that opens the door that leads from the desert into the garden of God in which there is all abundance. But man is foolish. He prefers to die in the desert rather than live by the word of God and live in the garden of true life.

THROUGH HIM WHO LOVED US
(Rm 8,35.37-39)

The Christian has a special wealth that no non-Christian might ever know: the love of the Father, the grace of Christ Jesus and the communion of the Holy Spirit. With this wealth the Christian overcomes every tribulation, distress, persecution, hunger, nakedness, danger and sword. He wins these things by taking them all and offering them to the Father for the redemption of the brothers. All these things have one purpose: separating the Christian from the love of Christ Jesus. Instead he assumes them, of-

fers them and so neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor future, nor present, nor height, neither depth, nor any other creature might ever separate him from the love of God, in Christ Jesus. This is a very high profession of faith. Today, it is too bad that the Christian has denied himself in this faith and goes around crying that there is no difference in faith, hope and charity between him and the non-baptized. Nobody has ever reached such levels of foolishness and stupidity.

GIVE THEM SOME FOOD YOURSELVES
(Mt 14,13-21)

There is no spiritual food in the world. The earth does not produce it. It must necessarily come from Heaven. The Lord has constituted some men and wants them to be the ones to feed everyone this food: they are the Apostles in their successors, in the presbyters, their close collaborators. For this mission, man, nourished by the body and blood of Christ, can feed his spirit every day and, through this tree of life, conserve himself in the truth of his being and his working. Instead, if he is not nourished, the spirit dies and man enters a vortex of darkness, foolishness, insipidity, stupidity, immorality, delinquency, small, large, hidden, public, legal and illegal crime. Today, the legal crime being committed because the spirit of man is dead and unable to see what is the best good for himself and for others are many. On earth, real life comes from the Eucharist. Sunday is for the Eucharist, it is not for other things. When this day is lived in the Eucharist, the whole week breathes of a new life, it breathes of God.

by the theologian,
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