

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS. JANUARY 2, 2022

GOSPEL ECO

Catequese Ecosocial desde o Evanxeo do Domingo



SITUATION

**From the faith point of view, what image or impression do I have of God?
Is this an image of God the Redeemer? Is He close to me?**

Let's ask about our image or impression of God, which helps us live our faith. It may not be an exaggeration to say that we often relate to a distant God who lives in Heaven, a God more concerned with religious interests than with our whole existence. Without any doubt, this God is fake and is very far from the one shown by the Gospel. God is not distant to us and does not ignore us and our world. In Jesus of Nazareth, born in Bethlehem, the invisible God becomes visible, in a natural and close person. John tells us in today's Gospel that God is in our encampment.

GOSPEL

Jn 1: 1-18.

In the beginning, the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was at the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and nothing came to be without him. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light so that all might believe through him. He was not the light but came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, but his people did not accept him. Those who received him he gave the power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God. And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son full of grace and truth. John testified to him and cried out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.' We have all received grace in place of grace from his fullness because while the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. The only Son, God, who is at the Father's side, has revealed him.

"RESPECTING AND CARING FOR THE COMMON HOME IS A NEW WAY OF LOVING GOD"



REFLECTION

We have read the first verses of the Gospel of John; they are the ones that make up the well-known "prologue of John", a Christological hymn with which the identity and origin of Jesus were explained to the communities of Ephesus. Announcing the "Emmanuel", the "God with us", contrasted with what the first Christians believed, especially the converts from Judaism, who had the image of a God, in Hebrew Adonay, transcendent and distant (in tune with our Cartesian reasoning) and they held the image of an almighty God who had freed the Israelite ancestors from Egyptian slavery. In contrast to this vision, John introduces us to the Word (logos). "God became flesh to dialogue with us," Pope Francis recently told us in the Urbi et orbi 2021 blessing. And he adds: "He himself incarnated this path (of end dialogue) so that we could get to know it and go through with confidence and hope".

In the Incarnation, the eternal Word of God, by which the entire Cosmos was created, takes our corporality incorporating in His person part of the material universe (cf. Laudato Si [LS] 135), that is, His body was constituted, like ours, with chemical elements of the Earth planet: oxygen, calcium, iron, etc. In the light of the Incarnation, Christians recognize that "Nature is not something neutral or worthless", the Son of God himself acquired natural elements when he became incarnate in the person of Jesus. On the other hand, since Christ is the first of all living things (cf. Jn 1:2), He constitutes Himself as the principle of life and the principle of recreation. The incarnate Son of God is the beginning of the reconciliation and salvation of all that is created. That is why it is said that the destiny of the fullness of Creation passes through the mystery of incarnation of Christ (cf. LS 99).

The incarnation of the Word that John brings us closer to also leads us to think about the revelation of God in Creation. "God speaks, and his Word is manifested in creation (cf. Gn 1:3ff; Ps 33: 6-9; Wis 9:1) and in history" (DC 91). The heavens and the earth were created (Ps 146,6). We understand then that the Word of God is not only revealed to us in the Bible. Saint Augustine said that "God reveals himself to us through Creation and the Bible." Nature is a splendid book where God speaks to us; his beauty and wisdom are displayed in everything He has created. When the sun shines, when night falls, God proclaims His love to us (cf. LS 85). That is why we understand that Nature has value beyond being a resource for production and consumption.

Let's go back to the Gospel; let's focus on the verse: "He came to his house, and his own did not receive Him. But to all who received Him, He gave the power to be children of God. This is a beautiful God's sharing with us, a remarkable capacity and responsibility to act on His behalf, in favour of humanity and the Creation that surrounds us.

COMMITMENT

May our commitment at the beginning of the new year be to opt for life, love, fraternity, the care of Creation, etc., and promote these fundamental options. Because, as the Holy Father Francis says in his message for World Day for Peace 2022, only with our sincere collaboration, firm commitments, generous dedication and full perseverance can we achieve a fraternal and ecologically healthy World.

PRAYER

God of the eternal Word, Life and Wisdom, send us your Spirit so that we may be instruments of peace and harmony. Our families are the places of passionate love for a fraternal society and an ecologically integral healthy World.