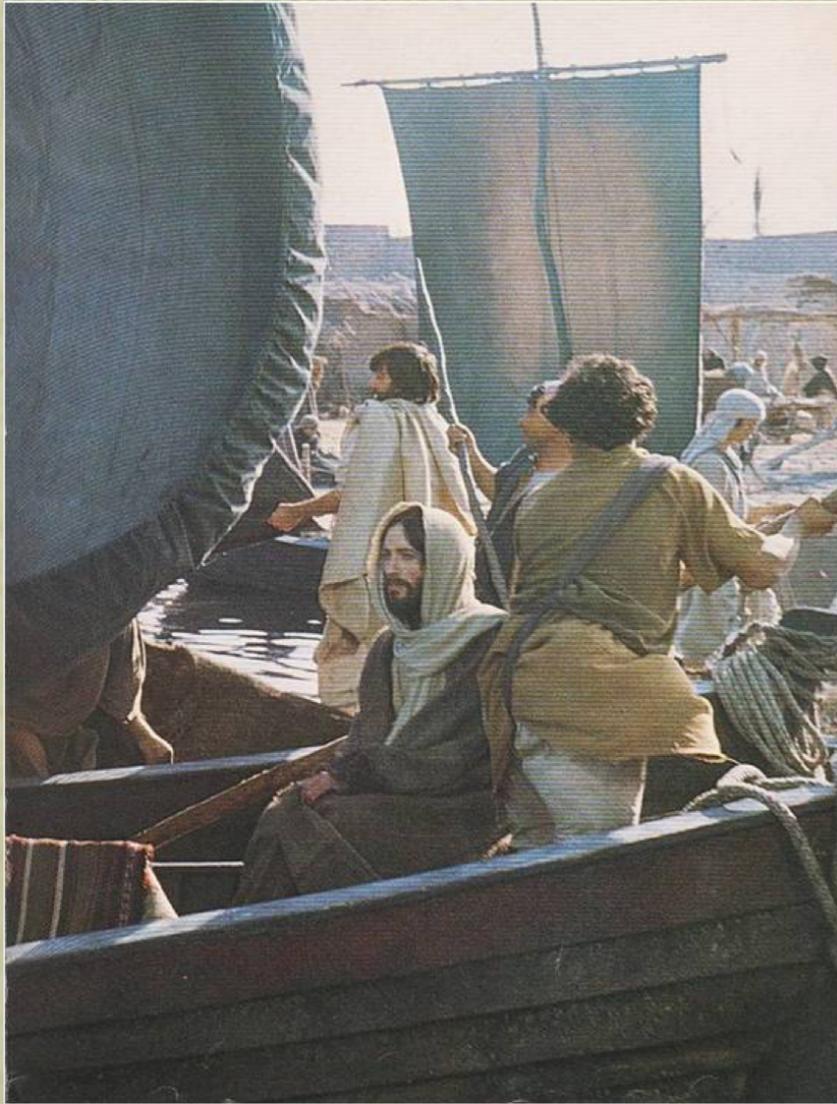


02. Discipleship and the Church





Jesus is THE **Sacrament**,
THE **Mystery**
THE **Symbol** of God

‘The **Word** became flesh
and lived among us,
and we have seen his glory,
the glory as of a father’s only son,
full of grace and truth’(John 1:14).

Colossians 1:14

‘In Christ the whole
fullness of God was
pleased to dwell.’

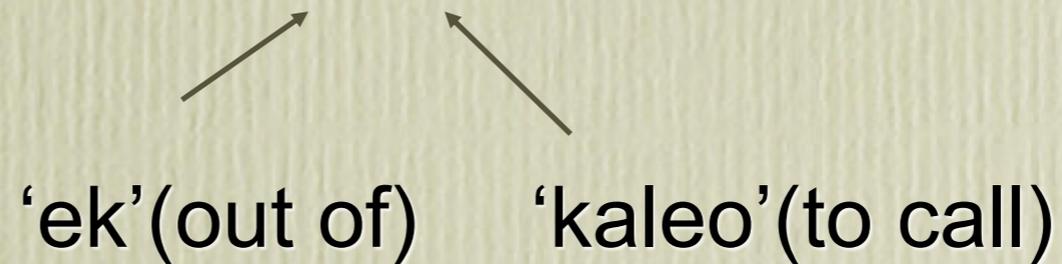
The Church is THE **Sacrament**
THE **mystery**
THE **symbol** of Jesus

As a community we are to be disciples of Jesus
'the Way' to the Father (John 14:10).

The Church is his 'body' in the world,
living the life given to us by his Spirit –
the Spirit he shares with the Father.

- The word 'church' like the German 'kirche', derives from the Greek 'kyriake' (belonging to the Lord). The Church is the community of disciples of the 'Lord', the Risen Christ.

The Greek word for Church is 'ekklesia'



Through his Son, Jesus, God is 'calling' everyone 'out of' darkness into light, drawing everyone to Christ and so into the church:

The Church is holy

God alone is holy

The Church is holy because God has chosen the Church as his Temple: ‘C

- ‘The holiness of the Church is constantly shown forth in the fruits of grace which the Spirit produces in the faithful. And so it must be. It is expressed in many ways by those who, each in his or her own state of life, tend to the perfection of love’(Vatican II, LG 39).

The holiness of the Church is the holiness of love.

It is the Spirit of communion between Jesus and God that is the soul and the heart of the Church.

The holiness of the Church has its source in this Spirit. 'I live, no longer I, for it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I live now is by the faith of the Son of God, loving me and giving himself for me'(Galatians 2:20).

There are sinners in the Church because 'the Church clasps the sinner to her bosom.' (Luke 15:1-2). God does the pruning and purifying. **n. 827**

John 14:15-18, 23

If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

And I will ask the Father,
and he will give you another Advocate,
to be with you forever.

This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive,
because it neither sees him nor knows him.

You know him, because he abides with you,
and he will be in you.

I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you ...

If you love me you will keep my word,
and my Father will love you, and we will come to you
and make our home in you.

John 15:4

‘Make your home in me as I make mine in you’



In exile on the island of Patmos, on the Lord's day, John had a vision. The Christian communities of Ephesus and the other cities in the Roman province of Asia were gathered for the Eucharist. They were like golden lampstands and the risen Christ was present in them dressed as a priest:

‘He was clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash across his chest. His head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and from his mouth came a sharp, two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining with full force’(Revelation 1:13-16).

[2Corinthians 4:6 - ‘glory of God on the face of Christ’]

Ephesians 1:20-23

God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand ... and put all things under his feet

and has given him who is head of all things
to the church which is his body, the fullness of him
who is in everything and fills everything.

In Christ we find the fullness of God. Furthermore, while everything shares in the grace of Christ and reflects something of his fullness, it is to the church that we must look if we wish to see his fullness, for he fills the church with his Spirit and pours out the fullness of grace into her. The church is the body which he fills with his life, which radiates his glory throughout the cosmos, and which draws the whole of humankind and all creation into his fullness as it is built up and grows into him.

The community of those who commit themselves to Jesus and to his self-offering, do so because they are empowered by his Spirit. Since it is the Spirit that gives life to the community, it is called his 'body'.

'We who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one **bread**'(1Corinthians 10:17).

'By one **Spirit** we were all baptised into one body'(1Corinthians 12:13).

'Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ for the sake of his body, that is, the church'(Colossians 1:24).

'Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body'(Colossians 3:15).

- Jesus likened himself to a bridegroom (see Luke 5:34-35).
- John the Baptist uses the same image when he declares that he is happy to see his disciples going to Jesus, for ‘He who has the bride is the bridegroom’. Jesus is the bridegroom, John is the bridegroom’s friend (John 3:29-30).
- This is picked up in the Book of Revelation:
 - ‘Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready (19:7).
 - ‘I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband’(21:2).

Revelation 3:20

Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking;
if you hear my voice and open the door,
I will come in to you
and eat with you, and you with me.

Catechism n. 776

‘As sacrament, the Church is Christ’s instrument.
The church is taken up by him also
as his instrument for the salvation of all,
the universal sacrament of salvation,
by which Christ is manifesting and bringing about
the mystery of God’s love for all people.

The Church is the visible plan of God’s love for humanity,
because God desires that the whole human race
may become one **People of God**,
form one **Body of Christ**,
and be built into one **Temple of the Holy Spirit.**’

‘What a delight your dwelling place is, YHWH of hosts!’(Psalm 84:1)

We see the Church as the new Temple.

‘You are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God’(Ephesians 2:21-22).

‘You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the first born who are enrolled in heaven.’

(Hebrews 12:22-23).

- The sacrament of this Spirit, the place where Jesus' Spirit is powerfully effective is the community of the Church, an extension in the world of Jesus' body, carrying out the will of God and bringing about on earth the reign of God's love (see Colossians 1:19 and 2:9).

‘The Risen Christ is now at work in human hearts through the power of his Spirit, not only arousing in them a desire for the world to come, but also animating, purifying and reinforcing the noble aspirations which drive the human family to make its life one that is more human and to direct the whole earth to this end.’

(Vatican II, G&S, §38).



Jules Chevalier msc

‘From the Heart of Jesus
pierced on Calvary, I see a
new world coming forth –
a great and life-giving
world, inspired by love and
mercy: a world which the
Church must perpetuate
on the whole earth.’

(Sacred Heart 1900)

Person – the fruit of a community

Lonergan Philosophy of God and theology

‘The person is not the primordial fact.

What is primordial is the community.

It is within community,

through the inter-subjective relations

that are the life of the community,

that there arises the differentiation of the individual person.

If persons are the products of community,

if the strongest and best of communities is based on love,

then religious experience

and the emergence of personality

go hand in hand.’

1Corinthians 11:23-25

(see Luke 22:10-20)



‘The Lord Jesus on the night when he was handed over took a loaf of **bread**, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my **body** that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

‘In the same way he took the **cup** also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my **blood**. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”



‘The cup of blessing that we bless,
is it not a communion in the blood of Christ?
The bread that we break,
is it not a communion in the body of Christ?
Because there is one bread, **we who are many are one body,**
for we all partake of the one bread.’(1Corinthians 10:16-17)

Apocalypse 21:2-3

I saw the holy city **the new Jerusalem**,
coming down out of heaven from God,
prepared as a **bride** adorned for her husband.

and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

‘See, the tent of God is with mankind.

He will pitch his tent with them as their God;

they will be his **peoples**, and he will be their God.

Ephesians 3:20

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever.
Amen.

Ephesians 4:4-6

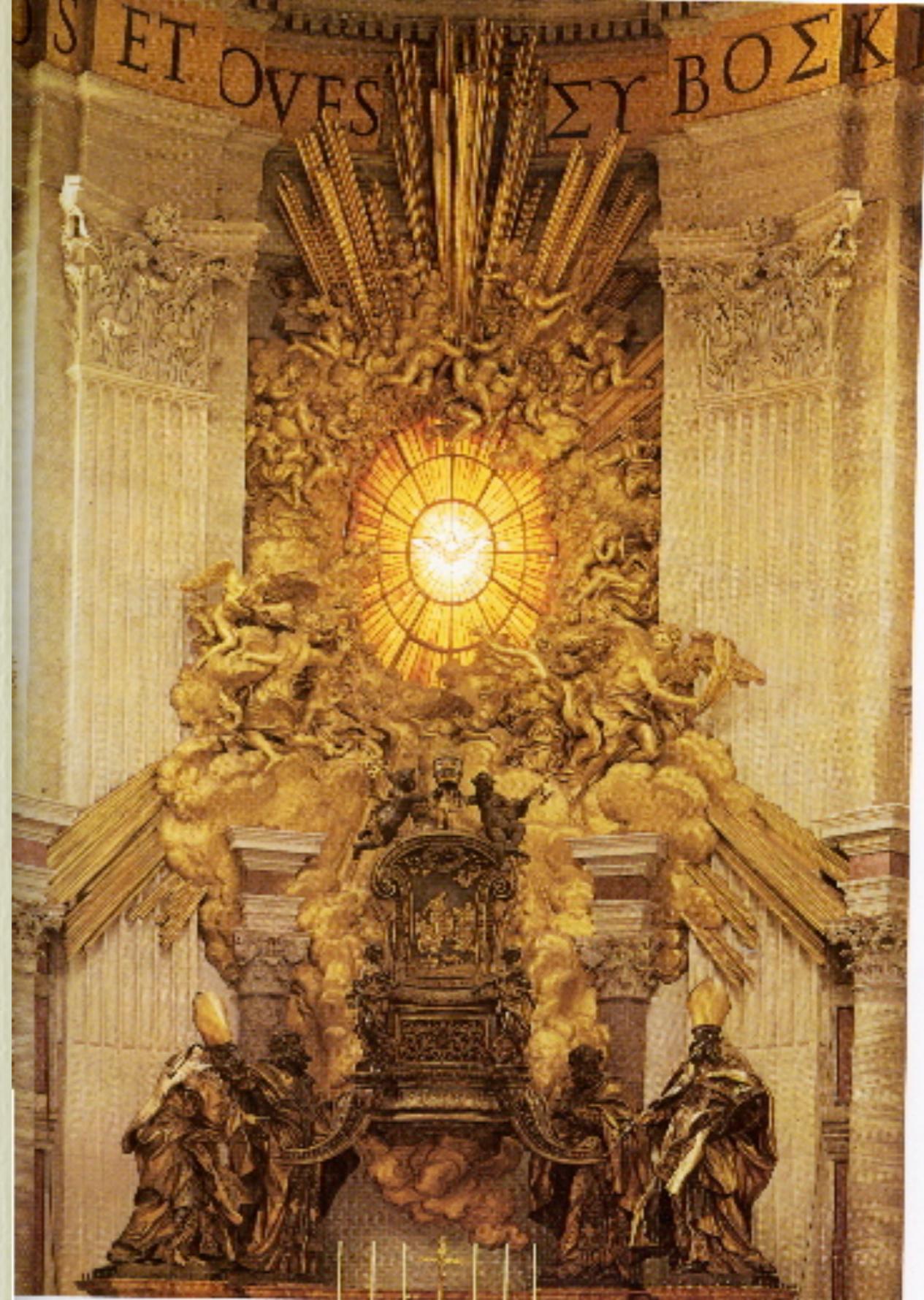
There is one body
and one Spirit,
just as you were called to the one hope of your calling,
one Lord,
one faith,
one baptism,
one God and Father of all,
who is above all and through all and in all.

- Office of Teaching
(‘Magisterium’)

n. 890

‘The pastoral duty of the Magisterium is aimed at seeing to it that the People of God abides in the truth that liberates.’

Wooden chair from 9th century said to have been used by St Peter.



Athanasius

John Chrysostom

Ambrose

Augustine

‘There are varieties of gifts 1Corinthians 12:4-7

[charisma]

but the same Spirit;

there are varieties of ministries

[diakonia]

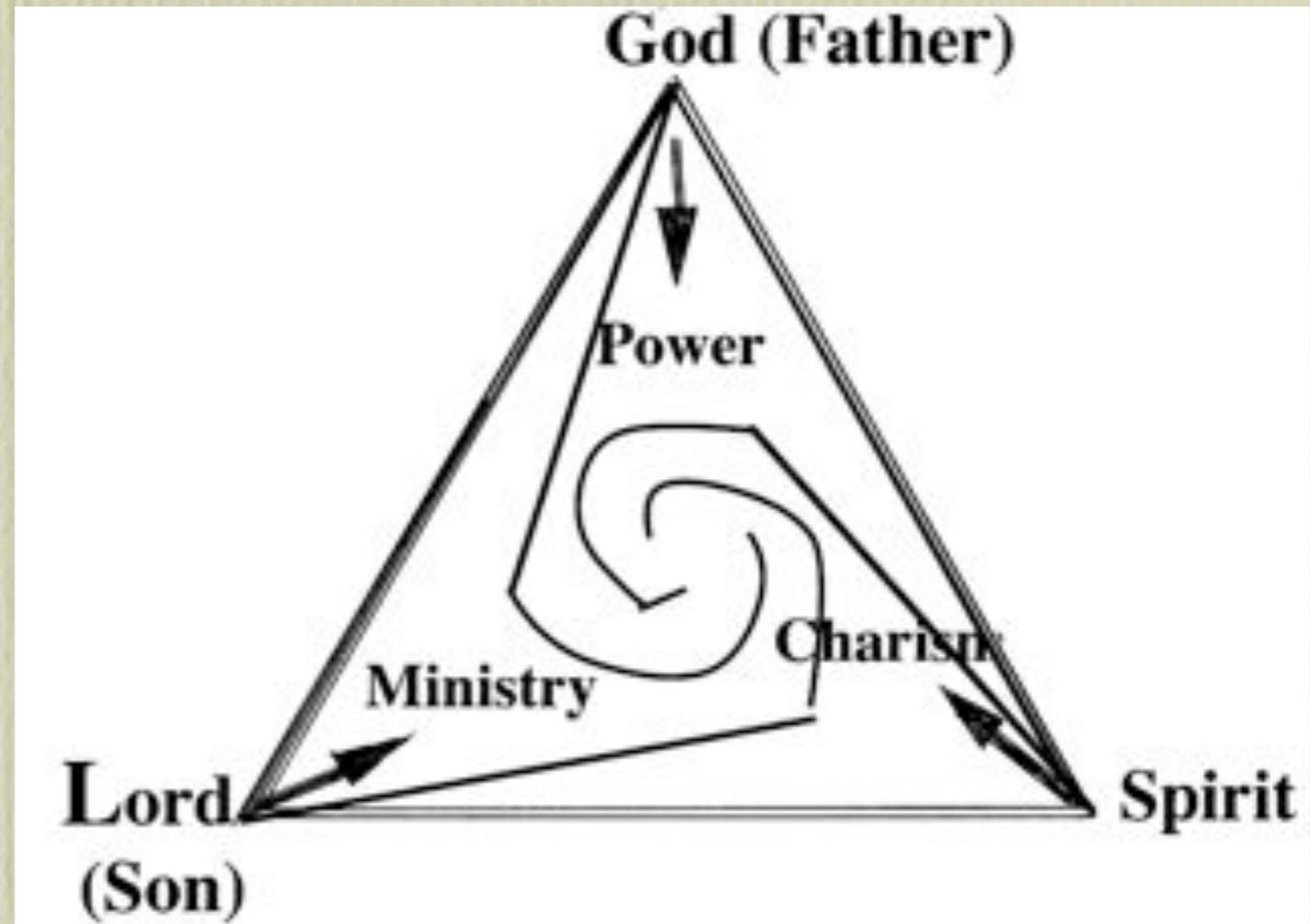
but the same Lord;

there are varieties of
ways of exercising power

[energema]

but it is the same God who
activates them all in everyone.

To each is given the manifestation of



Everyone is needed
for a vibrant church
to carry out Jesus' mission
in the world.

A truly 'Catholic' community

- open to embrace every person in his or her uniqueness
- open to welcome each person's gifts and insights
- open to respect each person's freedom

Karl Rahner Theological Investigations 1.4]

‘While preserving unity in essentials,
let everyone in the Church,
according to the office entrusted to them,
preserve a proper freedom
in the various forms of spiritual life and discipline,
in the variety of liturgical rites,
and even in the theological elaborations of revealed truth.
In all things let charity prevail.
If they are true to this course of action,
they will be giving ever richer expression
to the authentic catholicity and apostolicity of the Church.’

Unity not Uniformity

Communion not Conformity

Imperfect belonging to the Body of Christ

- We are all imperfect in Faith, Hope and Love
- We all belong to a community that does not fully acknowledge all parts of the Catholic Tradition
- We are all called to constant repentance, to open our hearts to let Christ live more and more in us.
- We are all called to draw nearer to Jesus, and so to each other, and so to mutual enrichment

‘I have come to cast fire upon the earth
and how I wish it were blazing already’ (Luke 12:49)

Teilhard de Chardin 1934

‘Some day,
after harnessing space,
the winds,
the tides
and gravitation,

We shall harness for God
the energies of Love.

And then,
for the second time in the history of the
world,
we shall have discovered fire.’

Ignatius of Antioch, Letter to the Ephesians IV,1-2

‘Let every one of you become a chorus of song,
so that in the harmony of your concord,
adopting the melody of God in unity,
you will sing for the Father in one voice,
in Christ Jesus.’

‘Love never stops caring;
love acts always in a kind way.

1Corinthians 13:4-8

Love does not act out of jealousy or envy;
love does not boast; or behave arrogantly;
love does not behave indecently or insist on its own way.

Love does not give way to irritation; or brood over wrongs;
love takes no pleasure in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.

Love has space enough to hold and to bear everything and everyone.
Love believes all things, hopes all things, and endures whatever comes.

Love does not come to an end.’

‘Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong.
Let all that you do be done in love’(1 Corinthians 16:13-14)

Colossians 3:12-14

‘As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.

Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Above all, clothe yourselves with love,
which binds everything together in perfect harmony.’

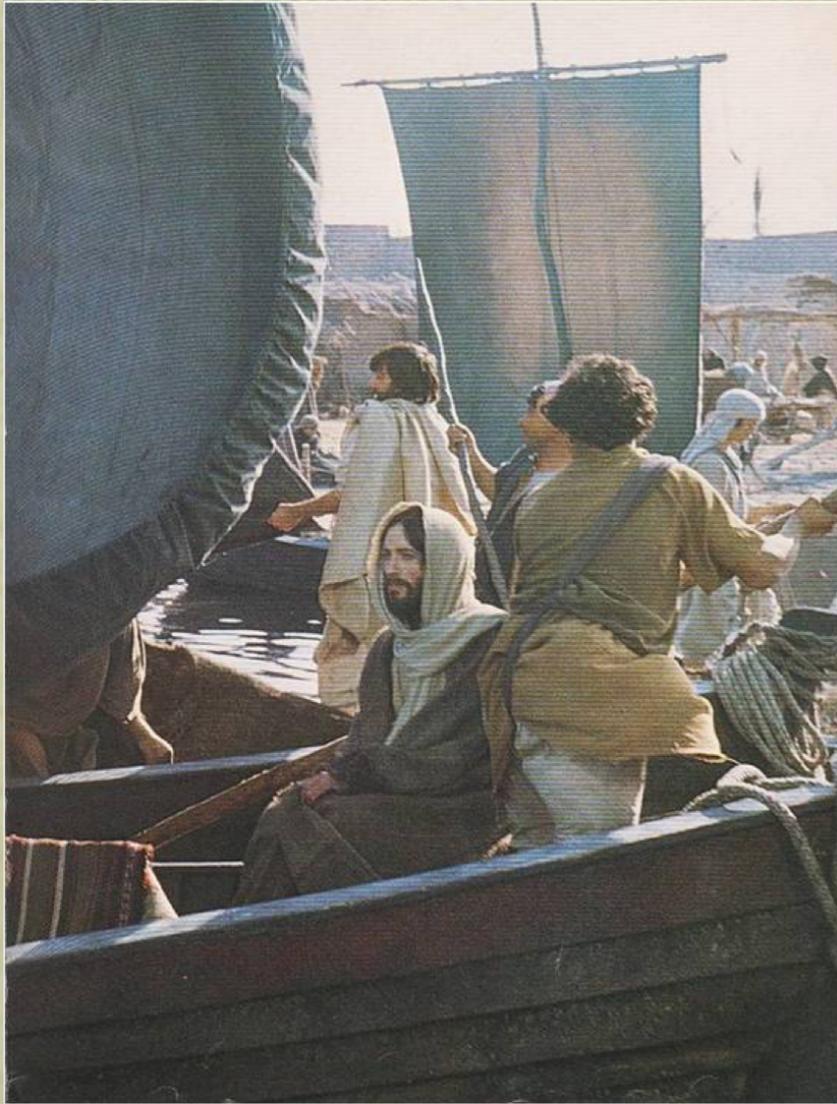
The love of the heart of Jesus is the love given to Jesus by God. It is this love that is poured into our hearts through the gift of the Spirit, and it is this love that overflows from our hearts to embrace our brothers and sisters.

As Paul writes: ‘God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us’ (Romans 5:5).

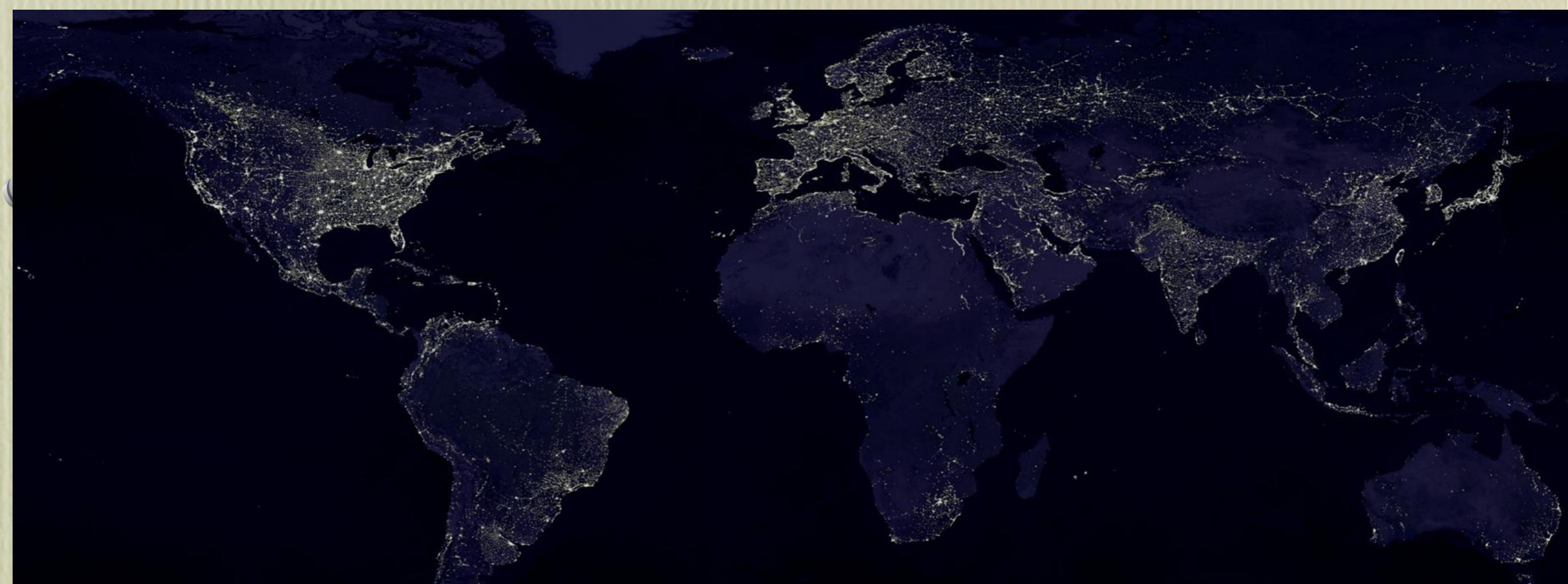
Mark 12:41-44

The widow's mite

‘This poor widow has put in more than all who have contributed to the temple treasury, for they have put in what they had over, but she, from the little she has, has put in everything she possessed, all she had to live on.’



Always there



Always There

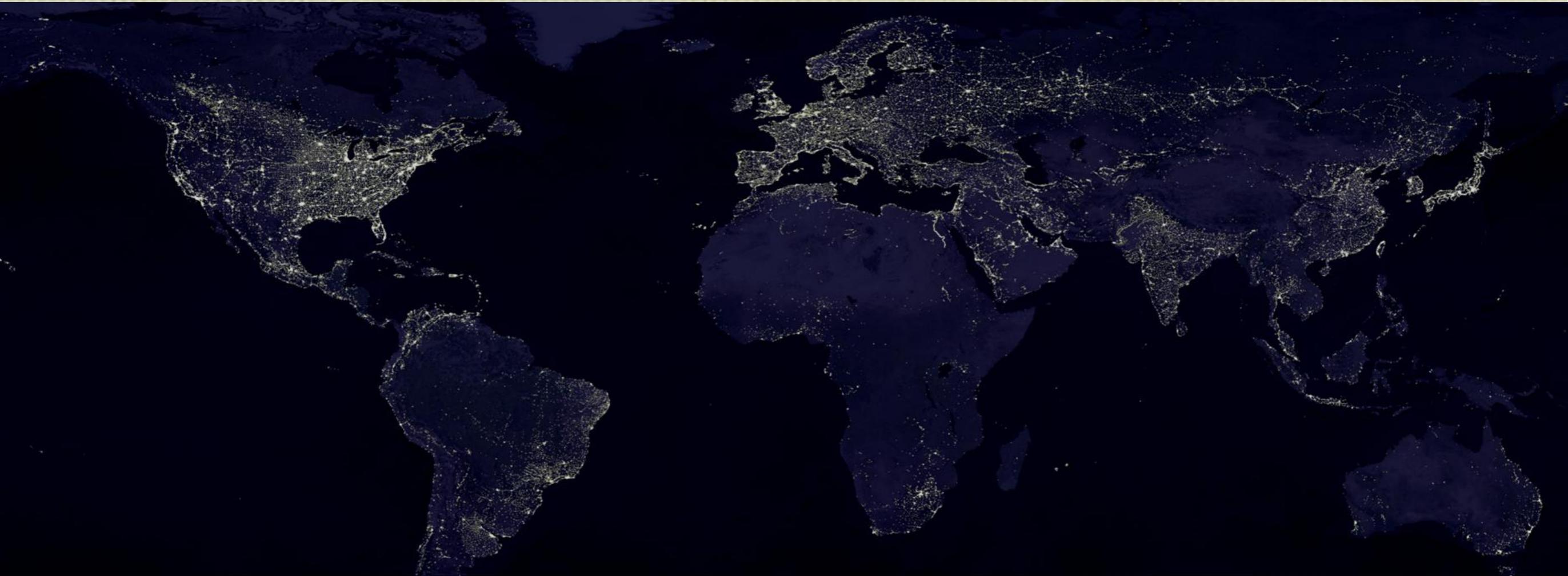
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You are there when we call on your name.

You are there, always the same.

You are there in the softness of the rain. Always there.



You are there at the end of a life.

You are there to lead us to light.

You are there at the baby's first cry. Always there.



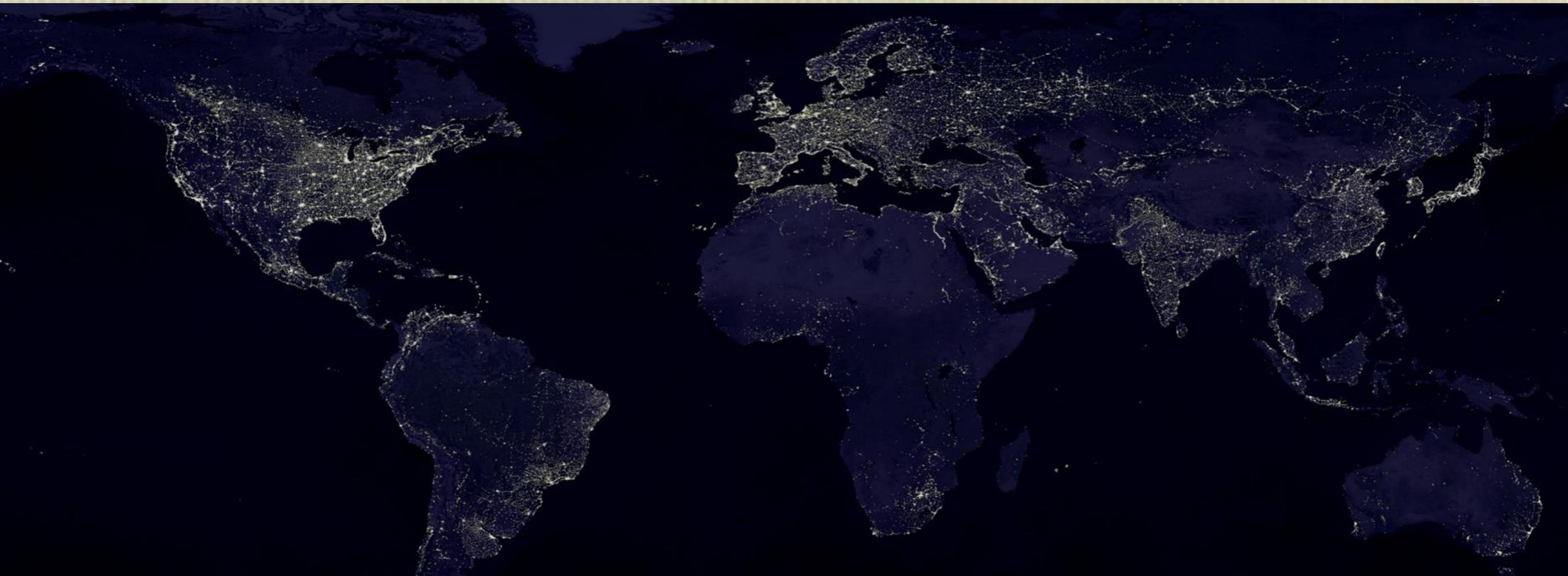
You are there like a mist on a hill.

You are there in the factory and mill.

You are there for the beggar and the king. Always there.



You are there in the forest and street.
You are there in the faces we meet.
You are there in the hungry and weak. Always there.





You are there when we call on your name.

You are there, always the same.

You are there in the softness of the rain. Always there.