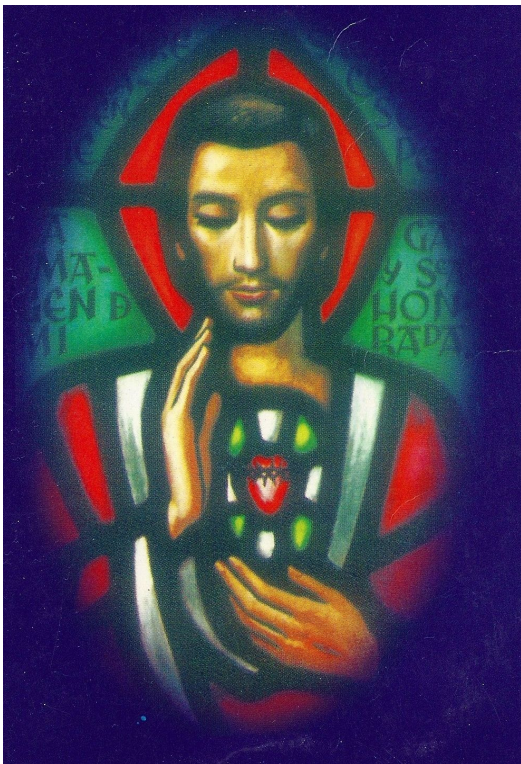




Sharing in Christ's prophetic mission II



‘The heart of God descends in haste
to his creation,
with the weight of an infinite love,

and the heart of creation rises towards God,
drawn by an attraction
that dominates all others in it.

It is in Jesus that these two hearts meet,
and they unite so profoundly
that the two hearts become one.’

(Jules Chevalier, ‘The Heart of Jesus, page 76.

Vatican II LG 39

‘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.’

Catholic Catechism 1992 n.25

(Roman Catechism, Council of Trent, 1545-1563, Preface 10).

‘The whole concern of doctrine and its teaching
must be directed to the love that never ends.
Whether something is proposed for belief,
for hope or for action,
the love of our Lord must always be made accessible,
so that anyone can see
that all the works of perfect Christian virtue
spring from love
and have no other objective
than to arrive at love.’

Every person is made from love and for love.
Everyone is called to enjoy divine communion
and everyone has a word to say and a spirit to share.

Yet, there is darkness and sin and dysfunction
and there is need for conversion.

Joseph Bernardin reminds us:

‘The Incarnation means that nothing of our humanity
is alien to God or untouched by divine power ...
**All of our human experience becomes in principle
a route of access to the divine.’**

- ## Dei Verbum 2

- ‘In pleased God in His goodness and wisdom to reveal Himself and to make known the mystery of His will ... that we should have access to the Father through Christ, the Word made flesh in the Holy Spirit, and thus become sharers in the divine nature ... So the invisible God from the fulness of His love addresses us as friends in order to invite us into his company.’
- revelation is interior, experiential and inter-subjective.
- God is interiorly calling His human creatures to communion.

- Joseph Ratzinger

- ‘We can see again here how little intellectualism and doctrinalism are able to comprehend the nature of revelation which is not concerned with talking about something that is quite external to the person but with the realisation of the existence of man, with the relation of the human “I” to the divine “thou”, so that the purpose of this dialogue is ultimately not information, but unity and transformation.’
- ‘Revelation ... is founded not only on the word that Christ preached, but in the whole of the living experience of his person, thus embracing what is said and what is unsaid, what the apostles in their turn are not able to express fully in words, but which is found in the whole reality of the Christian existence of which they speak, far transcending the framework of what has been expressly formulated in words.’

- Religious experience constitutes the highest level of human consciousness, the gift of transcendent love resonating in the human heart.
- This fits with Ratzinger's depiction of the relationship between the human "I" and the divine "Thou".

- 'Mind and heart interact in the search for God.
- Mind is at the intellectual level: it can raise questions about the divine and can use historical, dialectical and logical methods to understand what it can of the scriptures and the Christian tradition. It draws the levels together upwardly in its eros to know what it can.

- ‘Mind and heart interact in the search for God.
- Heart, on the other hand, is before all else interior and is manifest at the affective and values levels. It draws the levels together downwards as they open to the healing love from the divine heartspring. It is that level where religious love draws the human subject to surrender to the love of God. And heart, at that level, is often gifted with religious experience. Thus the two levels, intellectual and religious, meet and aid one another. Pascal put it neatly: the heart has reasons which reason does not know. I believe we can say: faith seeks intellectual understanding but in that pursuit it needs also the gifts of heart’(F. Fletcher).

John-Paul II, Mission of the Redeemer

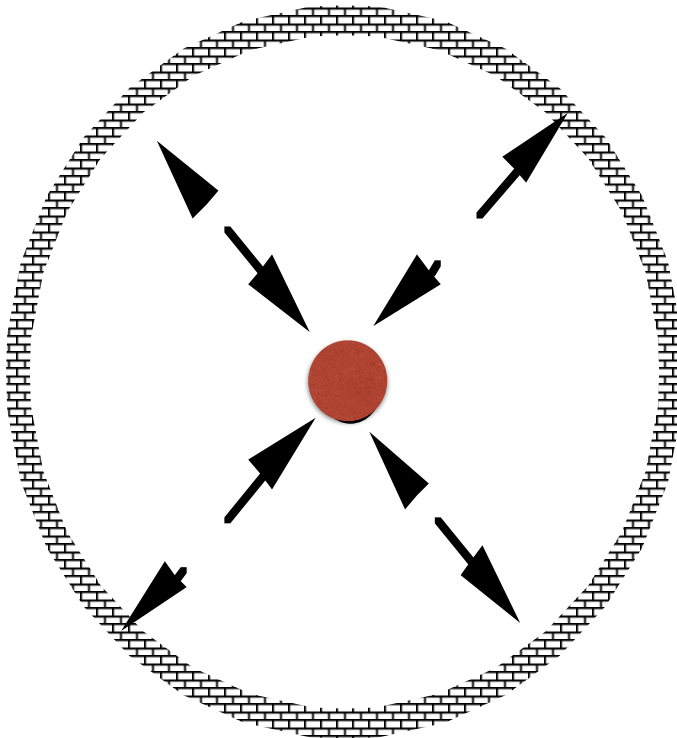
- ‘God does not fail to make himself present in many ways, not only to individuals but also to entire peoples through their spiritual riches, of which their religions are the main and essential expression, even when they contain gaps, insufficiencies and errors ... The fact that the followers of other religions can receive God’s grace and be saved by Christ apart from the ordinary means which he has established does not thereby cancel the call to faith and baptism which God wills for all people’(n.55).
- ‘Dialogue with those of other religions is demanded by deep respect for everything that has been brought about in human beings by the Spirit who blows where he wills’(n.56).

John-Paul II, Mission of the Redeemer

- ‘We must have respect for human beings in their quest for answers to the deepest questions of life, and respect for the action of the Holy Spirit in people ... Every authentic prayer is prompted by the Holy Spirit who is mysteriously present in every human heart’(n. 29).

Religious

Experience



Religion Re + ligare To bind back

God's Word is ETERNAL, so always **NOW**
God is speaking, inspiring, revealing, self-communicating
NOW

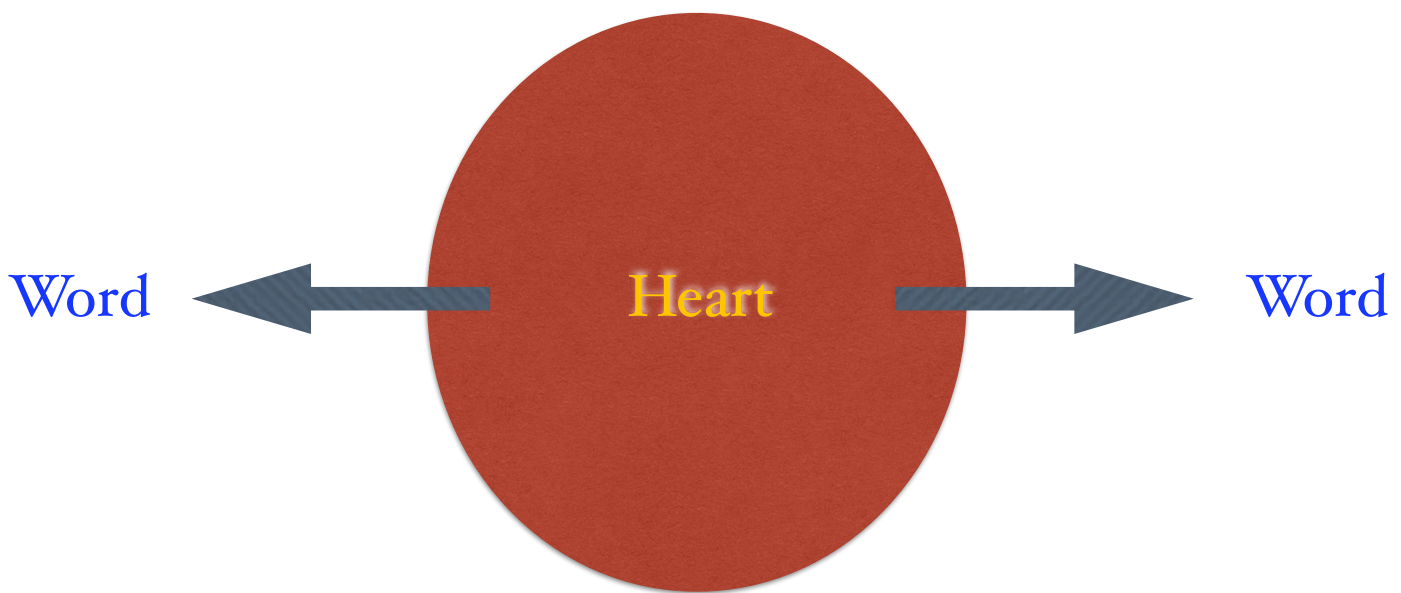
The **Mystical** dimension of religious experience



‘God’s love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us’ (Romans 5:5)

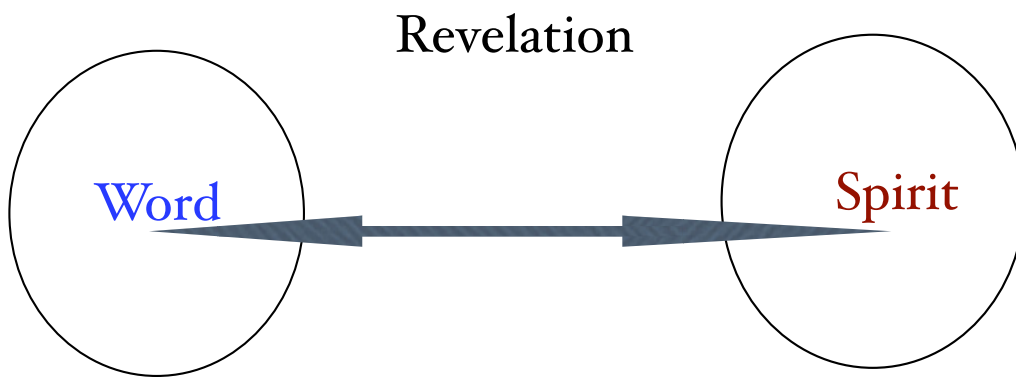
The **Numinous** dimension of religious experience

Word



'The world is full of God's glory' (Isaiah 6:3)

God's Word is ETERNAL, so always **NOW**



Numinous

Mystical

Heart speaks to Heart



Matthew 11:28-29

Priests

‘Through the sacrament presbyters, by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, are signed with a special **character** and so are **configured to Christ the priest** in such a way that they are able to act in the person of Christ the head’(PO, n.2).

‘The priest, by virtue of the consecration which he receives in the sacrament of Orders, is sent forth by the Father in the mediatorship of Jesus Christ to whom he is configured in a special way as head and shepherd of his people, in order to live and work by the power of the Holy Spirit, in service of the Church and for the salvation of the world’(PDV, n.12).

‘Priests are a sacramental representation of Jesus Christ, the head and shepherd’(PDV n.15).

Congregation for the Clergy: Priest in the third millennium (1999)

‘In the Church’s tradition, the ordained ministry is referred to as “sacrament”, since through this ministry those sent by Christ, by God’s gift, effect and offer that which they themselves can neither effect nor give ... The minister of Christ does not substitute for him but relies on him and allows him to act in and through him’(page 52,53).

This special sacramental consecration to Christ is the ultimate source of the priest’s confidence:

‘No one should be discouraged, as we are doing God’s work. The God who calls us is the same God who sends us and who remains with us every day of our lives’(PDV, n.4).

‘We are meant to lure the believers
onto healthy spiritual ground’(Bernardin).

It is vitally important that we ‘preach with **authority**’, connecting people with God, the **author** of revelation.

The ordained minister should know the tradition and be able to communicate it in public in an engaging way.

The following definition of the magisterium is a reminder that orthodox teaching is teaching that remains in touch with the Spirit in people’s lives:

‘The expression of the gift of the Spirit, whereby the Church’s pastors serve the community of believers by **discerning what the Spirit is saying** to the whole Church, calling it to a witness and life which is a faithful expression of the unchanging truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the midst of human history’(John Thornhill).

God's Word is ETERNAL, so always **NOW**

The ordained priest, as a sacrament of Christ directing the community to do God's will, should be one who is able to facilitate the cooperative building of a community of inter-dependent people. He needs to respect people and their gifts. He should be able to foster their contribution to the building of the community and to contributing towards its mission in and to the world. He will need to be sufficiently integrated to be able to focus upon others without his own agenda dominating, and have the ability to listen and to relate to people in an attractive and liberating way.

God's Word is ETERNAL, so **TRADITION**

John XXIII

‘Starting from a renewed, serene and calm acceptance of the whole teaching of the Church in all its scope and detail as it is found in Trent and Vatican I, Christians and Catholics of apostolic spirit all the world over **expect a leap forward in DOCTRINAL PENETRATION and the formation of human consciences IN EVER GREATER FIDELITY TO AUTHENTIC TEACHING.**’

Never Abstract

Historical Situation/ Questions being addressed/ How statement received

Hierarchy of truths

Looking for the **WORD OF GOD** inspiring the human words



You are my breath

La'illaha il' Allah

(1Corinthians 8:3)

