

Section 68:
Spirituality of the Heart
and the significant presence of the Risen Christ
in the heart of creation.
(By Hans Kwakman msc)

“In the Christian understanding of the world, the destiny of all creation is bound up with the mystery of Christ, present from the beginning,” Pope Francis states, while referring to St. Paul, who proclaimed: *“All things have been created through him and for him”* (Col 1:16), as well as to St. John, who in the opening of his Gospel writes: *“In the beginning was the Word... All things came to be through him”* (John 1:1-3).

Consequently, the Pope affirms that, *“from the beginning of the world, but particularly through the incarnation, the mystery of Christ is at work in a hidden manner in the natural world as a whole* (LS 99). Christ, he states, *“has taken unto himself this material world and now, risen, is intimately present to each being, surrounding it with his affection and penetrating it with his light”* (LS 221). But, in *Laudato Si* nr 99 the Pope adds, *“without thereby impinging on its autonomy”* (LS 99).

In *“Evangelii Gaudium”*, *“the Joy of the Gospel,”* the Pope had already declared that believing in and following the Risen Christ, is, *“something beautiful, capable of filling life with new splendour and profound joy, even in the midst of difficulties”* (EG 167). For those, who believe in the presence of the Risen Lord, the beauty of the world around us takes on a special meaning. *“Every expression of true beauty”* in human relationships or in art, in landscapes or in technical development, *“can be acknowledged as a path leading to an encounter with the Lord Jesus”* (EG 167). After all, *“a renewed appreciation for beauty”* is *“touching the human heart, while enabling the truth and the goodness of the Risen Christ to radiate within it”* (EG 167).

However, being the revelation of God, the Creator, the Risen Lord discloses his presence not only in beauty, but just as much in the messiness of this world and the confusion of our lives. So, the Pope exclaims: *“How wonderful is the certainty that each human life is not adrift in the midst of hopeless chaos, in a world ruled by pure chance! The Creator says to each one of us: “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you” (Jer. 1:5). We were conceived in the heart of God, and for this reason each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary”* (LS 65).

REFLECTION

RESURRECTION

*“Christ’s resurrection
is not an event of the past.
It contains a vital power which has permeated this world.
Where all seems to be dead,
signs of the resurrection suddenly spring up.
It is an irresistible force.
Often it seems that God does not exist:
all around us we see persistent injustice, evil,
indifference and cruelty.

But it is also true that in the midst of darkness
something new always springs to life
and sooner or later produces fruit.
On razed land life breaks through,
stubbornly yet invincibly.

However dark things are,
goodness always re-emerges and spreads.
Each day in our world beauty is born anew,
it rises transformed through the storms of history.
Values always tend to reappear under new guises,
and human beings have arisen time after time
from situations that seemed doomed.

Such is the power of the resurrection,
and all who evangelize are instruments of that power.”*

(Pope Francis in “Evangelii Gaudium,” n. 276).