



JPIC NEP

EXTRACT FROM POPE FRANCIS' ADDRESS TO THE NEW AMBASSADORS TO THE HOLY SEE. 12/12/2013

“Today, there is one area I would like to consider with you which concerns me deeply and which currently threatens the dignity of persons, namely, human trafficking. Such trafficking is a true form of slavery, unfortunately more and more widespread, which concerns every country, even the most developed. It is a reality which affects the most vulnerable in society. This cannot continue. It constitutes a grave violation of the human rights of those victimized and is an offense against their dignity, as well as a defeat for the worldwide community.

Human trafficking is a crime against humanity. We must unite our efforts to free the victims and stop this increasingly aggressive crime which threatens not only individuals but the basic values of society and of international security and justice, to say nothing of the economy, and the fabric of the family and our coexistence.

It must be admitted, sadly, that sometimes workers in the public sector and members of organizations involved in peace missions have also had a part in it. In order to achieve positive results, the efforts to combat human trafficking must also be effective on the cultural level and through communications. It is precisely on this level that we need to make a good examination of conscience: how many times have we permitted a human being to be seen as an object, to be put on show in order to sell a product or to satisfy an immoral desire? The human person ought never to be sold or bought as if he or she were a commodity. Whoever uses human persons in this way and exploits them, even if indirectly, becomes an accomplice of this injustice.”

REFLECTION ON INTERIORITY *Anne Harnet CP* (From JPIC Team)

We are aware of the three principles at work in the universe, Differentiation, Interiority and Communion. Today we will dwell a bit on Interiority and how that consciousness can change both ourselves and our relationship with the natural world.

The dominant view in science has been that the natural world **is just matter**. In more recent times scientists are beginning to realise that the natural world is a **self organising centre of creativity, with its own withinness**, its own depth and its own voice. Every creature has its own interiority whether it is an atom of carbon or an elephant or a human. Each of us carries the **capacity** to reveal itself to the entire earth community, to be fully present to other beings and to acknowledge the sacred/numinous depths that reside in every life form. The world is made up of a communion of subjects and not a collection of objects.

When we go outside into the natural world, how do we go? What is our attitude, our disposition? To have it as a backdrop? To examine it? Or to connect with it? That is a primary question for us all. In fact **nature reveals itself to us first** and if we are so disposed we can receive it, appreciate and enjoy it. Eg The star and the moon make the first move by radiating, how we respond depends on us.

Have you ever had the experience of sitting on a rock out in the open air and suddenly desiring something deep for your life? The interaction between the rock and myself evokes a response in me. **Everything interacts with us**, nothing just washes over us. For the rock itself, photons from the sun interact with electrons in the rock and the light that comes from the rock after this interaction is a new manifestation of the rock.

A Hawk flying over the ocean is flooded with the identity of the ocean, the fish in the sea is flooded in a different way with the ocean's identity. They know things about the ocean that we as humans do not know. We know other things about the ocean. Each being perceives according to its own sensory apparatus, in our case conscious self awareness. **None of us gets the whole mystery.** The only real information we get is when a creature discloses itself and we are fortunate enough to be present to receive it. Eg the star disclosing itself out of its own numinous identity by radiating.

In our history and our culture over the last few centuries **the universe has been stripped of its interiority.** Creatures have been seen as objects, products for consumption and the cost has been ignored. Because we have felt separate from the universe we have been in a relationship of domination, exploitation and this has brought about the destruction we live with now and which is becoming our destiny.

We know now that **the universe is a dual reality.** It is expanding outward and growing in complexity all the time and it also has an inner, psychic, spiritual dimension which is also expanding. **The urgent task now for us is to embed ourselves as members of the whole community of life,** as members among other members, all of which have interiority. Thomas Berry says that we need to reinvent **ourselves at the species level.**

There is a self organising intelligence at the heart of the universe. Hydrogen atoms know exactly how to be hydrogen atoms, our kidney cells know how to function, what to let in and what to keep out for our health. There are no outside instructions. The fireball was intelligent and the first hydrogen atoms were a **manifestation, a self revelation,** of the fireball. The Milky Way galaxy is a manifestation of the universe and Earth is a manifestation of the Milky Way become alive. We humans are the revelation of Earth, it is our origin, our nourishment and our guide. If Earth did not have interiority we would not have it! Poetry, prayer, music, relationships are our self disclosure coming from earth. Earth sings because earthlings sing. Your radiance is your self disclosure to me.

To deprive any creature of interiority is to disrupt the order of the universe. What do we see when we look into the eyes of an animal? We have the capacity to be overawed by the mystery and interiority there. Can we look at the beggar who comes along in the street and see that mystery and interiority? How practiced are we at responding to interiority? If we could become alive to it the sacredness of everything would flood in. So we need to develop the ability to respond to the depth of things, to become a container, to house the depth of things.

“ All of us have a sense of being drawn into the depth of things. When we go there we will find the future of the human! (Brian Swimme/mystics)

Each of us participates in the great mystery in our own way. Everything/everyone deserves to be revered in and for itself, and for what it reveals of the divine presence. This is our challenge.