

"What sustains?" - Impulses for a robust spirituality

Nevertheless. Conference for the New in Church (Heiner Wilmer)

What is robust? What is robust spirituality? How does renewal in faith go? How does depth work? Mystery; How does love without limits work?

Who lives, better: lived a robust spirituality? Moses and Jesus. Two leaders in the name of God, the liberator of the people of Israel and the Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

Moses at the thorn bush: silence, fire, names (dispute), glory, righteousness / same structure for Jesus' life and for us: the matrix.

Silence

1. (Moses) Attitude: Hebr. 10: "Therefore Christ saith at his entrance into the world, Sacrifices and meat offerings thou hast not required, yet a body hast thou made me; burnt offerings and sin offerings thou delightest not in. Then said I, Yea, I come - to do thy will, O God..." (cf. Ps 40) - Ecce venio
2. Do: Jesus in the desert ("filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan. Then the Spirit led him around in the desert for forty days" - Lk 4), before his public appearance, after the baptism in the Jordan (Lk 3).
3. Madeleine Delbrêl, "La joie de croire" - Meditation written in 1945/46, under the title "Our solitudes": "Nos solitudes" "La solitude, ô mon Dieu, Ça n'est pas que nous soyons seul, c'est que vous soyez là. (...) Être seul, ce n'est pas avoir dépassé les hommes, ou les avoir laissés; être seul, c'est savoir que vous êtes grand, ô mon Dieu que seul vous êtes grand" (p. 105f).
4. Everyone needs silence; no renewal without silence, without solitude; silence heals. Silence is at the beginning, in the middle and at the end; silence is the mortar between those stones that hold the house of our lives together. Retreating to a monastery, going on pilgrimage, alone in the garden, in a corner of one's room; being quiet and alone. Giving space to God. Delbrêl: also when waiting by the cooker until the water is hot.

Fire

1. Blaise Pascal: this year we celebrate the 400th anniversary of his birth. Born on 19 June 1623 into a wealthy family. Great talent for mathematics. At 16 he published a brilliant work on conic sections; at 19 he constructed the "Pascaline", the first calculating machine; at 23 he determined the weight of air. From René Descartes he adopted scepticism: Cogito ergo sum. From Thomas Hobbes, the motto of his theory of the state: "Man is a wolf to man".

On the night of 23 November 1654, Pascal experienced a kind of epiphany, a fiery mystery instigated by God that was to shape his existence for the rest of his life, a shattering and at the same time elevation of a person, with a devastating and uplifting intensity. There is a testimony to this event by Pascal himself, which is now one of the greatest treasures of the Paris Bibliothèque Nationale: his 'Mémorial'.

Pascal had sewn this memento into the lining of his coat. From then on, he carried this note with him like a talisman. The leaf was discovered by chance by a servant after his death. After the exact date, which is in the Catholic tradition, it begins with a large written word that encloses everything else in a mystical way:

"FEU" - Fire. Year of Grace 1654/ Monday 23 November, Day of St. Clement, Pope and Martyr, and others in the Martyrology. Eve of the day of St. Chrysogonos, martyr, and others. From about ten and a half in the evening until about half an hour after midnight /FIRE/God, Abraham's, God, Isaac's, God, Jacob's, not the philosophers and scholars. /Certainty, certainty, feeling: Joy, peace. The God of Jesus Christ."

The fire is the reference to the burning bush, by which Moses feels highly attracted and shaken to the core. It is the living God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who is effective in the history of Israel, who is able to affect and convert man down to his last fibre.

This is different from the "God of philosophers and scholars" who is totally incapable of evoking emotions of joy, awe and love in disciples or of moving them to radically change their lives and then to orient God's command. (CiG, 25/2023)

2. Emmaus Disciples (Lk 15) / Pentecost: Tongues of Fire / "Converts and Missionaries" (Danièle Hervieu-Léger, sociologist of religion, 1999)
3. Arguing with professors: Why Jesus? Soteriological. Why heaven? Eschatological. WHY - basis of every reform; not the WHAT and the HOW. (Simon Sinek); Protestant Bishop, according to survey of Catholics and Protestants: After death we are ahead...
4. What am I burning for? Still learning. Always learning new things. Who am I burning for? Devotion? Cf. Ukrainians for the freedom of the country, children, family.

Names

1. Do I know my name? My parents' programme with the naming? What did they designate me for? What determines me, shapes me? Family messages, voices around me; what is my own experience?
2. American general, NATO autumn manoeuvres on the farm, little Heiner - stamps. Inter-esse. Not Habermas, cognition and interest. Do I know the other, am I in between? And grow like that. THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTER-ESSE!!!
3. Development: mine, but also God's; Gen 16:18 (El Shaddaj) versus Ex 3:14 (I have no name; I am who I am).
4. Call someone, God calls, I can call too. At least look for an ally, another missionary. I need you. Because God needs you. Everyone calls another person. Not alone - community. Leadership.
5. Nelson Mandela: a great leader. I learned a lot from my father. When I was a little boy, he took me to tribal meetings. Two things I remember. Always, we would sit in the circle. And second, my father would speak at the end. He would make sure that

everyone had spoken. And that everyone had been heard. To give everyone the feeling to be heard and to have contributed. Then he would get the benefit to learn what everyone thinks. Take it all in. Understand from where they are speaking. The only thing you can do is to ask questions. (Cf. Simon Sinek, TED Talk, Leadership)

Glory

1. (Moses) Edith Stein, Beauty ("De Veritate" - transcendentals: bonum, verum, pulchrum - the first two culminate in pulchrum).
2. Romans 5:2: To see God's glory is our highest hope. "[We] boast in the hope of the glory of God" (Rom 5:2).
 "[Our] blessed hope [...] [lies in] [...] the appearing of the *glory* of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).
 "Father, I will that where I am, they also which thou hast given me may be with me, that they may behold my *glory*", Jesus prays in John (Jn 17:24).

To see and share in God's glory is our highest hope through the gospel of Christ.

Such hope, which we actually know and respect as the greatest treasure, has an enormous and decisive impact on our values and our decisions and actions in the here and now.

Learn more about the glory of God. Deal with the glory of God and the glory of Christ. Study them and get to know them. Deal with the glory of this world that reveals God's glory and the glory of the gospel that reveals Christ's glory. Respect the glory of God in all things and above all things as your treasure.

3. Celebrating liturgy; beautiful, graceful services; creative attractiveness; trying new forms, also beyond the congregation; "The Other Thursday", Hanover parish: no sermon on Thursday; priest sits down and everyone talks for 10-15 minutes.
4. Madeleine Delbr el: Caf e "Le Clair de la lune" (Joie de croire, p. 229); Paris, " le caf e n'est plus alors un lieu profane. Nous savons que par vous nous sommes devenus la charni ere de chair, la charni ere de gr ace en pleine nuit, attirez le vieux pianiste qui ai oubli e l'endroit o u il est et joue pour la seule joie de bien jou e, la violoniste qui nous m eprise ... le guitariste et l'accord eoniste qui font de la musique sans savoir nous aimer. Attirez cet homme triste qui nous raconte des histoires soi-disant gaies; ... attirez le buveur qui descend en tanguant l'escalier de premier  tage; attirez ses  tres affal es, isol es derri ere une table, dilater notre c oeur pour qu'ils y tiennent tous , *car le monde n'est pas toujours un obstacle   prier pour le monde "*

Justice

1. Sermon on the Mount: Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. (Mt 5,6 - Sermon on the Mount) Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Mt 5:10 - The concept of righteousness is absolutely central, for it is the only one that occurs twice in the Beatitudes) Thus, the Sermon on the Mount is also titled the "discourse of true righteousness"

Therefore I say to you: Unless your righteousness is far greater than that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. You have heard that it was said to the ancients, "You shall not kill; but whoever kills anyone shall be liable to judgment.

Jesus' proclamation and actions are guided by the motto of "new justice": God establishes a new relationship with Israel by showing mercy to the poor, women, marginalised people and sinners, regardless of their merits. Jesus himself is called "the righteous one" (Acts 3:14).

2. No reforms without deep roots in Jewish tradition: Etty Hillesum, * 1914 in Middelburg (Netherlands), murdered 1943 in Auschwitz, Jewish parents, but grew up practically without religiousness. Describes herself as the "girl who could not kneel and then learned to do so on a coconut mat in a messy bathroom". Was in Westerborg, a Nazi transition camp, where she went in and out to assist Jews as a social worker. She was by the side of the victims. She was the thinking heart of the barracks, as others later said about her. She took care of them when they were completely desperate before the transport: What should I take with me, should I still take my comb, my brush, they asked. Others prefer to pack more bread. Instead of bread, Etty herself would rather take the Bible and all of Rilke's letters, she loves Rilke. "I live my life in growing rings that stretch over things. I may not accomplish the last one, but I will try. I circle around God, around the ancient tower, and I circle for millennia; and I do not yet know: am I a hawk, a storm, or a great song." To be by the side of the victims, in solidarity.

On 12 July 1942, she wrote a "Sunday morning prayer" in her diary: "These are bad times, my God... Every day is enough for itself... I want to help you. God that you won't leave me, but I can't vouch for anything from the start. Only this one thing becomes increasingly clear to me: that you cannot help us, but that we must help you, and by doing so we ultimately help ourselves. It is the only thing that matters: to save a piece of you in ourselves, God. And perhaps we can help to resurrect you in the tortured hearts of others." (p. 149) - bulky diary notes, not always expected: "You cannot help us, O God, we must help you."

From her mother she learns the love of Russian literature, of Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy and Chekhov. From her father the wonderful Jewish humour: when the Gestapo forbids Jews to ride bicycles, her father says laconically: "That's a great advantage, now they can't steal it from us, and besides, we've been wandering the desert for 40 years without a bicycle."

3. Micah 6:4: "You have been told what is good: to do right, to do justice, and to walk in your ways with your God"
(possibly Paris, Rue de la Rochette, Église Notre-Dame d'Espérance)
4. Not only Isaiah, also Jeremiah; mysticism and politics!

Hebr 10: Ecce venio - Jesus speaks when entering the world. This is how we speak too. Our attitude?

The disciples of Jesus lived in the expectation of the near future. Today? Perhaps we are again in this dynamic of near expectation, only it is the other way around. - Thomas Harling said: Some give the church another ten years. Well, so be it. Don't despair, don't be negative. Good. Then let's go for it. And do our best.

Symbols: Clock and Bible

It is not the fear of conforming to the spirit of the times that should guide us, but the awareness of the inner grace that we can recognise the spirit in time. We are not filled with fear of the spirit of the times, but with hope in the spirit in the times.

It is time. Ite missa est. Go. Go into the world from God. And go from God into the world.