

Daily Meditation 09/05/22

A View on the Sacred Cosmos from Italy

Good morning.

For the last couple of weeks, part of my work has been to sort out my papers and documents that I've been keeping over the years. And I came across the partial translation of Italian philosopher Vito Mancuso's introduction to my book, *Original Blessing*, that came out in Italian several years ago. And I found it quite stimulating, actually.

And Mancuso has a very fine reputation as a philosopher and a psychologist in Italy at this time in history, and I was very honored that he wrote the introduction to my book.

So it inspired me to take another look at *Original Blessing*, which has had such a wild journey because it blew the roof off the Vatican under two popes--34 years of excitement. They actually called the book "dangerous and deviant," which is pretty strong language!

But Mancuso cites me in the introduction, where in standing up to the Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith under Ratzinger, I commented this:

From the exaggerated reaction of Ratzinger to the message of hope, creativeness and responsibility of this book (Original Blessing), I learned how thoroughly married the patriarchal faction of Christianity is to original sin. And, as far as being 'dangerous and deviant,' I said, 'I'm convinced that what is dangerous and deviant is the growth of patriarchal control, of pessimism, of anthropocentrism, and of the ideology of original sin.'

So I don't often look back on my arguments to passe papacies that, as I say, endured for 34 years. But seeing this through the eyes, in the words of an Italian philosopher, who as I say wrote the Italian introduction to the book in Italian, this kind of gets me thinking again. Wouldn't it you?

So I'm reminded of some of the quotes I have very early in chapter one from Thomas Berry. He says, "Our children need to learn not only how to read books composed by human genius, but also how to read the great book of the world. Reading this great book is natural to children."

Now in a daily meditation about a week ago, I offered a sharing of Maria Montessori and Thomas Berry

on how important teaching about the universe is to little children. So this quote from Thomas Berry is a fine complement to that.

He also says, "The universe is the primary revelation of the Divine, the primary scripture, the primary locus of divine-human communication."

And another quote that really struck me was this: that on page 45 of my book and under chapter two, I cite the great Hebrew Bible scholar, Claus Westermann, who says, "No concept of history that excludes or ignores God's activity in the world of nature can adequately reflect what occurs in the Old Testament between God and his people."

So, in other words, we're talking about salvation history, or the history of creation.

But you see, evolution, it seems to me melts that division. Evolution is about the history of creation, the history of the universe. And people talk about salvation history. Well, they should be talking about creation history, because creation is pretty darn salvific. It's creation that birthed us, brought us from nothing, brought us from apes, brought the apes from something very different from the ape, and so forth.

So the whole history of evolution is emphasizing our history, is built into every being in this universe. And all of us share a 13.8 billion-year story.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.