

Creating a Civilization of Love

Speaking to those gathered in St. Peter's Square on Pentecost Sunday 1970, Pope Paul VI, said,

"Although to some it may seem strange Pentecost is an event that also involves the secular world. For it gave rise to a new sociology—one which penetrates the values of the spirit, which forms our hierarchy of values, and which confronts us with the truth, and with the ultimate destiny of humanity.

It is this which has given us our belief in the dignity of the human person, and our civil customs, and which above all leads us to resolutely rise above all divisions and conflicts between humans, and to form humanity into a single family of the children of God, free and fraternal.

We recall the symbolism at the beginning of this amazing story, of the miracle of many different languages being made comprehensible to everyone by the Spirit. It is the civilization of love and of peace which Pentecost has inaugurated—and we are all aware how much today the world still needs love and peace!"

The new evangelization will manifest itself in a “civilization of love” a renewed way of living in the world that will not only affect those who claim Christianity as a defining way of life, but also influence those who do not know the “way” of Christ. The Good News is meant for all who begin each day hoping to hear any hint of good news; particularly those living in the “dark places” that shape so many in our world.

The Gospel of Jesus provides us with a “way” of life that is fundamentally different than the experience of many in our world. Christ still calls his community of disciples to be the catalyst, or in the terminology of Jesus – salt and light - enabling a “way” for our world toward a civilization of love and peace. This way of life confronts our world to seek a fuller expression of our humanity as it emerges within an ambivalent 21st century culture.

Our parishes and schools are challenged to become centers of evangelization and spirituality, providing the formative environment for creating a unique and unambiguous vision for life. This unique lens allows a “way” of understanding the world and a “way” to engaging the world, utilizing the foundational theological and moral principles of our Catholic faith. This distinctive identity emerges from the very center and the heart of the Church, enabling humanity to meet at the intersection of faith and culture; transforming the relativism, individualism, and commercialism of our culture – engaging the mind and heart and spirit for a meaningful way of life; and implicitly and explicitly shaping a civilization of love.

LGaetano