

Daily Meditation 09/06/2022

On Gratitude for the Immanence of God in Nature

Good morning.

We continue our interaction with Vito Mancuso, a very respected philosopher and psychologist in contemporary Italy who generously wrote a very rich introduction to my book *Original Blessing* when it was translated into Italian. And in today's part of his essay which I reproduce in part, he uses some imagination and compares my work to that of Giordano Bruno.

Now I've often mentioned Giordano Bruno, as being so important, historically, because it was in the year 1600, the launching of the 17th century, and it was a jubilee year in Rome, that the Inquisition burned Giordano Bruno at the stake. First they tortured him--they cut his tongue out--and they burned him.

And he, like myself, was a Dominican. And he like his brother Dominican, Thomas Aquinas, was trying to bring science into religion. And Aquinas, of course, faced fierce, fierce resistance in his day. So much so that, after he died, three bishops in Oxford and in Paris, where Aquinas taught for many years, revisited and condemned his work, because he was agreeing with Aristotle on what was called the consubstantiality of body and soul.

In other words, he refused to be dualistic and Platonistic, putting the body down putting matter down like Augustine had done and most Christian theologians before Aquinas had done.

But Mancuso makes these comparisons between Bruno's day and experience and my own. He says there are some...

by respecting the differences, and without wanting to make of Fox a reborn Bruno, there are nevertheless some concrete analogies. One is the affiliation to the Dominican Order, the hostility of the hierarchical church, the importance of science for their spirituality, the interest in other religions --

...what I call deep ecumenism. And Bruno was way out front in wanting to interact with the Protestant churches of the 16th century.

And finally, says Mancuso,

...the same nucleus of the spiritual proposal that is characterized as religiousness-based cosmo-centrally on three fundamental points for both.

Remember that Mancuso talks about the cosmo-centrism of creation spirituality, of my work, as opposed to the sin-centrism of the dominant religious paradigm. So he sees these three fundamental points between my work and Bruno's.

Number one, "the immanence of God and nature, and accordingly, the demolition of the dualism between God and the world."

Number two, "spirituality as thankfulness toward life"... thankfulness toward life... and of course, I quote Thomas Aquinas, that the real meaning of religion is supreme thankfulness and gratitude, and Julian of Norwich says the most important prayer is a prayer of thanksgiving.

And thirdly, says Mancuso, the "struggle against the dark ideology of original sin."

So he sees these three principles as linking my work to Giordano Bruno, and I am honored to be put in Bruno's company by a brother Italian to Giordano Bruno, Vito Mancuso.

Thank you, we'll see you tomorrow.