

Daily Meditation 06-22-23

Expansion and Immensity: The Universe and Us

Good morning.

Today I invoke Ernesto Cardenal in our meditation, letting us see how he recognizes the expansion of the universe, the most important discovery of the 20th century.

And here is a poem he wrote, "Cosmic Canticle," a very long poem on the history of the universe that so moved him.

I visited him at his home in Nicaragua, when I was on my sabbatical year of silence. And he showed me his library where he was reading the works of Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry and others about the new cosmology.

I'm going to show you some teachings from Ernesto Cardenal. He was a great poet and a spiritual and political leader. He was also a Catholic priest who studied with Thomas Merton as a novice at Gethsemane abbey and monastery. He writes,

Nature is religious in its very essence. A star studded firmament, for example, is one great supplication. The spirit of every landscape is a spirit of prayer. And so is the deep silence of solitary places. The crickets and the stars speak to us of God. And what they are telling us is that they were created by God. The entire cosmos aspires to a union with that God from whom it has gone forth. The law of love is the supreme physical and biological law of the universe, and also the one and only moral law. I give you a new commandment: Love one another, as I have loved you.

He writes,

All things have an element of enchantment, but also an element of disenchantment and disappointment. The enchantment derives from the fact that all things are reflections and images of God. And the disenchantment is due to the fact that they are only images and not the real reality. They are not God.

Nothing in the universe is ugly, there is only beauty, or a relative lack of beauties, or a relative lack of the Divine sheen, in certain particular things. Things bear in themselves an element of beauty, beauty in greater or lesser degree, but they are not beauty as such. God is the light that these are beautiful bodies, if there is nothing in him, that is not pure beauty.

God is eternally young and new, His works are always vernal, and the world is reborn every morning at daybreak, as though it had just been created. The dawn of every day is a new “Let There Be Light,” and has the freshness and novelty of that first dawn.

Prayer is as natural to man, as speaking, sighing and seeing, as natural as the palpitation of a loving heart. And actually that is what prayer is: a murmur, a sigh, a glance, a heartbeat of love.

Words of wisdom from Ernesto Cardenal.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.