



VATICAN - WORDS OF DOCTRINE - Rev Nicola Bux and Rev Salvatore Vitiello - "THEO-LOGY: logical discourse according to the Logos on God"

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) - The "new times" of Christian thought, of which we have spoken already, inaugurated with the Election to the See of Peter of Pope Benedict XVI has a particularly interesting implication in the theological ambit. From no few sides voices have been raised in strong criticism of contemporary theology often more concerned with self-justification of its own existence than to explain the reason for faith in Jesus of Nazareth, Lord and Christ. A theology which is "intellectual", is felt to be distant and of little use by the holy people of God which, on the contrary, understands those who know how to speak to the heart, explaining with simplicity and clarity the truths of the Catholic faith. Even our new church movements and communities and all the many "creative minorities" which constitute an authentic possibility for renewed evangelisation and the rediscovery of Europe's Christian roots, have shown not rarely some diffidence with regard to a "certain theological thought" immediately recognising the danger that the 'discourse about God' could remain prisoner of present day feeble modes and philosophies.

Since, in fact, modern thought is impregnated with rationalistic relativism, which on closer observation, being a contradiction in terms, is already sufficient for its total implosion, and since the only possible outcome of this aberrant philosophical-cultural current is nihilist drifting, it is not to be excluded that theology itself may be a victim of this cultural climate.

The only possibility for theology to rediscover its proper statute of truth, to avoid being reduced to the rank of totally subjective science founded on the non-demonstrable, (and therefore non-science), lies in its inseparable bond with Logos, with reason. This bond acquires objectivity mainly in two ways: the relationship with reality, proper understanding and correct use of reason.

In the relationship with reality, of which the human person is the only point of self consciousness, there emerge the 'I's fundamental questions, questions on the meaning of one's life and the ultimate destiny of man and the cosmos. Only in the relationship with reality there emerges that universal emerge human «religious sense», considered a merely cultural development by too many schools of historicist thought, which, on the contrary, resisting all reductionism, re-presents itself through the centuries, as it truly is: a constructive and inseparable element of the human subject. Theology to be authentic service to the truth and to mankind, must measure itself with «religious sense», with «open reason», with the human person «question» in essence, window on the Mystery. An authentic discourse on God cannot allow its categories of thought to be moulded by present day philosophical relativism, not even to «speak of God today». Even less can theology be a prisoner of self-referential linguistic play, which has no authentic relationship with reality, because it would end up being concerned only with itself, losing all missionary thrust.

Reality is a question of facts and a fact is the historical existence of Jesus of Nazareth, just as fact are also His words: «I am in the Father and the Father is in me », «He who sees me, sees the Father», «I am the Way, the Truth and the Life ». Faced with these statements, faced with the continually thought-provoking mystery of the Incarnation of the Logos, again and again theology, thought on God, is called to take up the challenge to explain, starting with the facts, the hope which animates Christians of all times. An authentic discourse on God must continually show that universal human religious sense finds in the incarnate Logos the only satisfying answer. An answer which escapes all mechanism of necessity because founded on freedom: the freedom of God to reveal Himself to mankind as incarnate Logos, the freedom of the human person to accept or reject human ontological structure and with it the announcement of salvation as accomplished, but also, and above all, the extraordinary and total freedom of the Encounter between Christ, present in history in those who are His own, and the men and women of every era. In fact « Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction» (Deus Caritas est n.

1). (Agenzia Fides 21/9/2006; righe 48, parole 672)