



PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR CULTURE

CULTURE AND MYSTICISM



"Howsoever much you purvey the soul, you will never find its boundaries, so deep is its logos" (Heraclites).

This new Department has been set up by Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi within the Pontifical Council for Culture. Its name, unusual, wishes to express the commitment to dialogue with contemporary men and women who are open to the Transcendent, but who have lost their identity, and so are unable to recognise it and becoming ever more "Unknown".

The work of this area aims to understand how mysticism, far from being a "privilege" for a few specialists, can be of interest to everyone today, as it was in times past and will be in the future, by offering what Spinoza proposed at the end of his *Ethics*: "beatitudo et salus".

This is not an accidental and unusual "happiness" but a sublime beatitude, which made Dostoyevski exclaim: "One minute of beatitude! Is this enough to fill the life of a man?" There is no reference to the otherwise contingent "health", but at the deep and essential "salus", which is at once salvation and health for each person.