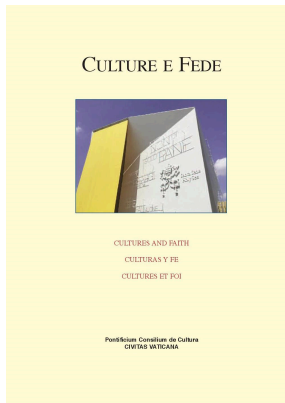




CULTURE AND ECOLOGY

Cultures and Faith Vol. XXIII 2015 N. 3



Vol. XXIII 2015 N.3 of the Dicastery's journal has its focus on culture and ecology.

Pope Francis' encyclical "Laudato Si'" refers to the cultural dimension of the ecological crisis, appealing for a bold cultural revolution (n. 114) able to draw on the riches of the world's different cultures in the broadest sense.

Together with info on our other activities, including the Holy See's Pavilion at Expo (pictured) this edition of the review carries four scholarly articles on culture and ecology.

Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO underlines how the encyclical dovetails with the spirit of her institution and its scientific, educational and cultural programmes in favour of sustainable development, against climate change and protecting the world's cultural and natural heritage. Her critique describes the ills of privatisation, objectivisation and parcellisation and she also offers some considerations on anthropology and the history of the humanist movements, tracing the development of our understanding of what it means to be human and what it means to be a part of nature with the help of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, René Descartes and the street slogans surrounding the Paris Cop 21 meeting.

Next is our consultor Isabell Naumann with a paper on *Women, cultures and dialogue* subtitled "no ecology without an adequate anthropology". Using religious language she notes the call to an ecological conversion as evidence of our encounter with Jesus Christ which effects our relationship with the world around us, our common home. Time, world and nature are in a certain sense sacramental and the call to holiness and sanctification requires us to embrace principles of responsibility and dialogue. She brings to the table the gifts of the genius of women, which counter the male-oriented technological civilisation by bringing a sociality that provides a home in our technical desert; symbolising security, home and shelter, women guard the meaning of being human.

Using Hannah Arendt's analysis of the crisis of culture and its painful effects on both the environment and the human community, Isabel Varanda then articulates the widespread sense of devastation caused by a culture of waste, consumerism and irresponsibility. The Pope's call for an integral ecology needs to include the social and human dimensions, and not be limited to nature. Local cultures once cultivated the land and the city for the common good and as we enter a post-industrial Ecological Age as *homo faber-culturalis*, in light of a growth in intelligence and reason, there is a need to recover humanism and return

to an exercise of power-with-others (not power-over) and so Varanda proposes we follow Arendt's vision of culture as a continuity of the world and love for the world.

The final paper is a reflection by Pierluigi Malavasi from the perspective of the social and pedagogical movements engaged in receiving the Pontiff's appeals for a collective approach to the challenges of an integral, sustainable, ecological development for all. With notes on education, vocation and responsibility, he brings to the fore the social justice elements before highlighting the ecumenical dimension and the Franciscan tradition's very attentiveness to the small things, to the poor and to creation itself. As his title says, *nothing in this world is indifferent to us*.