

I. REVELATION OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

For it is you who have granted us the knowledge of your truth. And who can tell of all your acts of power, make all your praises heard, or recount all your wonders at every moment? (Anaphora of the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great)

A. God's Revelation

18 The faith of the Church is founded on God's Revelation. By this Revelation the invisible God, from the fullness of his love, speaks to human beings to make himself known to them and to call them to communion with him: "In his goodness and wisdom God chose to reveal himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of his will (see *Eph* 1:9) by which humankind might have access in the Holy Spirit to the Father and come to share in the divine nature through Christ, the Word made flesh (see *Eph* 2:18; *2 Pt* 1:4)."¹⁰ God, who "dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see" (*1 Tm* 6:16; see *Jn* 1:8; *1 Jn* 4:12), "came clothed in flesh ... so that both the living and the dead might know of his visitation and of the coming of the Lord." By revealing himself, God, who in his essence is unknowable, "wishes to make [people] capable of responding to him, and of knowing him, and of loving him far beyond their own natural capacity."

19 God's Revelation is realized simultaneously by deeds and words, which are intrinsically bound up with each other and shed light upon each other.' It involves a specific "divine pedagogy."¹⁴ God communicates himself to humanity gradually, preparing it in stages for the reception of the Revelation of his own self, culminating in the fullness of this Revelation in the person and activity of the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ. "Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds" (*Heb* 1:1-2). Only in his incarnate Word, which was from the begin-

¹⁰ VATICAN COUNCIL II, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum* [The Word of God], 2.

¹¹ ILARION, METROPOLITAN OF KYIV, *Sermon on Law and Grace*, 2.

¹² *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 52.

¹³ See VATICAN COUNCIL II, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum* [The Word of God], 2.

¹⁴ See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 53.

ning (see *Jn* 1:1), that is, in Jesus Christ, does God reveal himself in all fullness; for in him, together with human nature, "the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily" (*Col* 2:9).

20 In the Old Testament, God manifested himself to Moses on Mount Sinai as *The-One-Who-Is, I Am WHO AM* (*Ex* 3:14), revealing to Moses not something about himself, but his very Self. The name *The-One-Who-Is* points to the personal nature of God, who possesses being in his very Self and who is the Source of all existence and life. In the New Testament, God, who is first to go out to meet humankind (see *Jn* 3:16; 1 *Jn* 4:19), reveals himself as Father through his incarnate Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit (see *Mt* 11:27).

1. God's Word in Creation

21 Only God exists from all eternity, and it is he who has brought all creation from non-being into being. Only he possesses the fullness of life; whereas the world, having been created, owes its existence to him. God creates everything by his Word: "All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being" (*Jn* 1:3; see *Gn* 1). Nature, created by God, and nature's laws proceed from the Word: "For the voice ... and command were as a natural and permanent law for [the earth]; it gave fertility and the power to produce fruit for all ages to come." The Word of God provides the norm, or law, as well as meaning to all creation: the phrase "God said" means that a wise and creative word has been imparted to every substance or nature.¹⁶ In the contemplation of nature, its established laws and harmony, we come to know the wisdom of the Creator and the beauty of his plan. All creation praises God, his majesty, his glory and wisdom: "The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork" (*Ps* 18[19]:2); "Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" (*Ps* 8:2).

22 By means of the world, as God's creation, we come to know the Creator: "Ever since the creation of the world, his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made" (*Rom* 1:20). The Holy Fathers of the Church have often compared the world to a book through which we discover its Author.¹⁷ By coming to know God through his creation,

¹⁵ BASIL THE GREAT, *Hexaemeron*, Homily 5, 1: PG 29, 96A.

¹⁶ See GREGORY OF NYSSA, *Hexaemeron*: PG 44, 88-89.

¹⁷ See BASIL THE GREAT, *Hexaemeron*, Homily 4: PG 29, 77; JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *Homily on Statues*, 9: PG 49, 105-122.