

o8. The Spirit breathes where the Spirit wills





1 Timothy 2:4

‘God desires everyone
to be saved,
and to come to the
knowledge of the truth.’

‘The grace of God has appeared for the salvation of **all**’(Titus 2:11).

‘As one man’s trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man’s righteous living leads to acquittal and life for **all**’(Romans 5:18).

‘God has assigned all to disobedience,
that he may have mercy upon **all**’(Romans 11:32).

The essence of the Gospel is that God is indeed the Creator of every person conceived into this world, and that God’s love for each is unconditional and complete. It is obvious from everything Jesus did and said that God intends to draw everyone into divine communion.

‘The wind blows where it chooses,
and you hear the sound of it,
but you do not know
where it comes from or where it goes.
So it is with everyone
who is born of the Spirit”(John 3:8).

An aerial view
of ancient
Babylon.



Samaritan priest





Jerusalem Temple

A Rabbi
with the Torah



Albrecht Alt

Nazareth market



‘Peoples everywhere, open the doors to Christ! His Gospel in no way detracts from human freedom, from the respect that is owed to every culture and to whatever is good in each religion.’

(JPII Mission of the Redeemer n. 3)

God is already drawing everyone into communion

‘What you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.’

(Acts 17:23).

‘The Church respects and esteems these non-Christian religions because they are the living expression of the soul of vast groups of people. They carry within them the echo of thousands of years of searching for God, a quest which is incomplete but often made with great sincerity and righteousness of heart. They possess an impressive patrimony of deeply religious texts. They have taught generations of people how to pray. They are all impregnated with innumerable 'seeds of the Word' and can constitute a true preparation for the Gospel’(Paul VI Announcing the Gospel n.53).

‘The first stages of the Kingdom of God can also be found beyond the confines of the Church among peoples everywhere, to the extent that they live 'Gospel values' and are open to the working of the Spirit who breathes when and where he wills’(JPII Mission of the Redeemer n. 20).

‘The Second Vatican Council recalls that the Spirit is at work in the heart of every person, through the “seeds of the Word”, to be found in human initiatives – including religious ones – and in the human effort to attain truth, goodness and God himself’(JPII Mission of the Redeemer n. 28).

‘The effect of the Church’s mission is that whatever good is found sown in people’s minds and hearts or in the rites and customs of peoples, these are not only preserved from destruction, but are purified, elevated and perfected for the glory of God.’

(Vatican II LG17).

‘Every authentic prayer is prompted by the Holy Spirit, who is mysteriously present in every human heart.’

(JPII Mission of the Redeemer, n. 29).

‘The universality of salvation means that it is granted not only to those who explicitly believe in Christ and have entered the Church. Since salvation is offered to all, it must be made concretely available to all. But it is clear that today, as in the past, many people do not have an opportunity to come to know or accept the gospel revelation or to enter the Church. The social and cultural conditions in which they live do not permit this, and frequently they have been brought up in other religious traditions. For such people salvation in Christ is accessible by virtue of a grace which, while having a mysterious relationship to the Church, does not make them formally part of the Church but enlightens them in a way which is accommodated to their spiritual and material situation. This grace comes from Christ; it is the result of his Sacrifice and is communicated by the Holy Spirit. It enables each person to attain salvation through his or her free cooperation [He then quotes GS 22]’(John-Paul II, *The Mission of the Redeemer* §10).

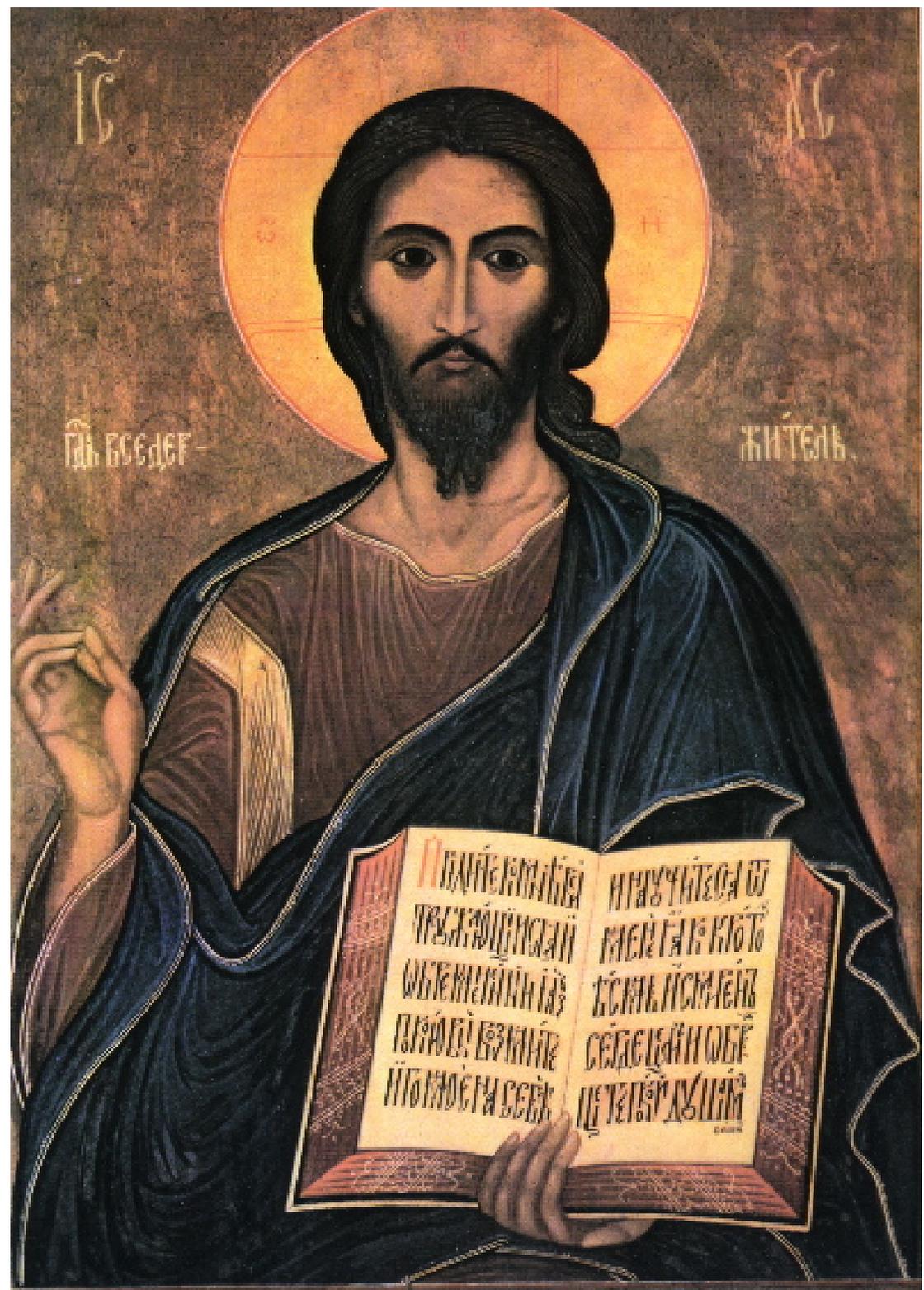
John-Paul II Redemptoris Missio 1990

‘God does not fail to make himself present in many ways, not only to individuals but also to entire peoples through their spiritual riches, of which their religions are the main and essential expression, even when they contain gaps, insufficiencies and errors ... The fact that the followers of other religions can receive God’s grace and be saved by Christ apart from the ordinary means which he has established does not thereby cancel the call to faith and baptism which God wills for all people’(§55).

‘Dialogue with those of other religions is demanded by deep respect for everything that has been brought about in human beings by the Spirit who blows where he wills’(§56).

Jesus of Nazareth

He is the climax of God's self-giving to the human race, and the climax of our response.



Jesus calls Matthew to follow him (Carravaggio)



‘The whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now.’(Romans 8:22)

‘Through the action of the Holy Spirit the Good News takes shape in human minds and hearts and extends through history. In all of this it is the Holy Spirit who gives life’(JPII Mission of the Redeemer n. 21).

‘The ultimate purpose of mission is to enable people to share in the communion which exists between the Father and the Son.’

(JPII Mission of the Redeemer n. 23)

‘Creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God’(Romans 8:19).

‘If anyone is in Christ there is a new creation’(2Cor. 5:17).

The longing of creation is that everyone will welcome the love offered by God in the heart of Jesus, and that everyone will listen to God’s Word revealed in him and share in the Spirit of love that flows between Jesus and God, and so be drawn into the divine communion that is God’s being. Then, finally ‘God will be all in all’(1Cor. 15:28).

‘The Church addresses people with full respect for their freedom. This mission does not restrict freedom but rather promotes it. The Church proposes; it imposes nothing. The Church respects individuals and cultures and honours the sanctuary of conscience’(JPII Redeemer of Mankind n. 39).

‘Dialogue with those of other religions is demanded by deep respect for everything that has been brought about in human beings by the Spirit who blows where he wills’(JPII Redeemer of Mankind n. 56).

‘Christ the Redeemer fully reveals to us who we are as human beings ... If you wish to understand yourself thoroughly you must draw near to Christ ...

The Redemption that took place through the Cross has definitively restored to human beings their dignity and given back meaning to our life in the world.’(JPII Redeemer of Mankind n. 10)

‘Working for the Kingdom of God means acknowledging and promoting God’s activity, which is present in human history and transforms it. Building the kingdom means working for liberation from evil in all its forms. The Kingdom of God is the manifestation and realisation of God’s plan of salvation in all its fullness.’(JPII Redeemer of Mankind n. 15).

Ignatius of Antioch, Letter to the Ephesians IV,1-2

‘Let every one of you become a chorus of song,
so that in the harmony of your concord,
adopting the melody of God in unity,
you will sing for the Father in one voice,
in Christ Jesus.’

John Henry Newman, Letter 1841

‘Faith is but the expression of love. If they and we were animated
by one spirit, we *should* unite in one Church. The belief of the heart
would lead to the confession of the lips. Reverse the process,
and you but sew a new piece into an old garment.’

In 1845 Newman joined the Catholic Church

- November 21st 1964, promulgation of decree Unitatis Redintegratio
The word "redintegratio"(instead of "return") was invented by Paul VI in 1962 for "convergence towards Christ".

"The restoration of unity among all Christians is one of the principal concerns of the Second Vatican Council ...
The division openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalises the world, and damages that most holy cause, the preaching of the Gospel to every creature"(UR§1).

Dialogue : Paul VI Ecclesiam Suam 1964, n.138-141

‘Dialogue is not proud; it is not offensive ... Its authority is intrinsic to the truth it explains, to the charity it communicates, to the example it proposes. It is not a command; it is not an imposition; it is peaceful; it avoids violent methods; it is patient; it is generous ... In the dialogue, one discovers how different are the ways which lead to the light of faith, and how it is possible to make them converge on the same goal ... Dialogue will make us wise.’

- Paul VI Homily on occasion of canonisation of 40 English and Welsh martyrs (Oct 25th 1970). A paragraph added by his own hand.

‘May the blood of these martyrs be able to heal the great wound inflicted on God's Church by reason of the separation of the Anglican Church from the Catholic Church ... Their devotion to their country gives us the assurance that on that day, when – God willing – the unity of faith and life is restored, no offence will be inflicted on the honour and integrity of a great country such as England. There will be no seeking to lessen the legitimate prestige and usage proper to the Anglican Church when the Roman Catholic Church – this humble "servant of the servants of God" – is able to embrace firmly her ever-beloved sister in the one authentic communion of the family of Christ: a communion of origin and faith, a communion of priesthood and rule, a communion of saints in the freedom and love of the spirit of Jesus.’

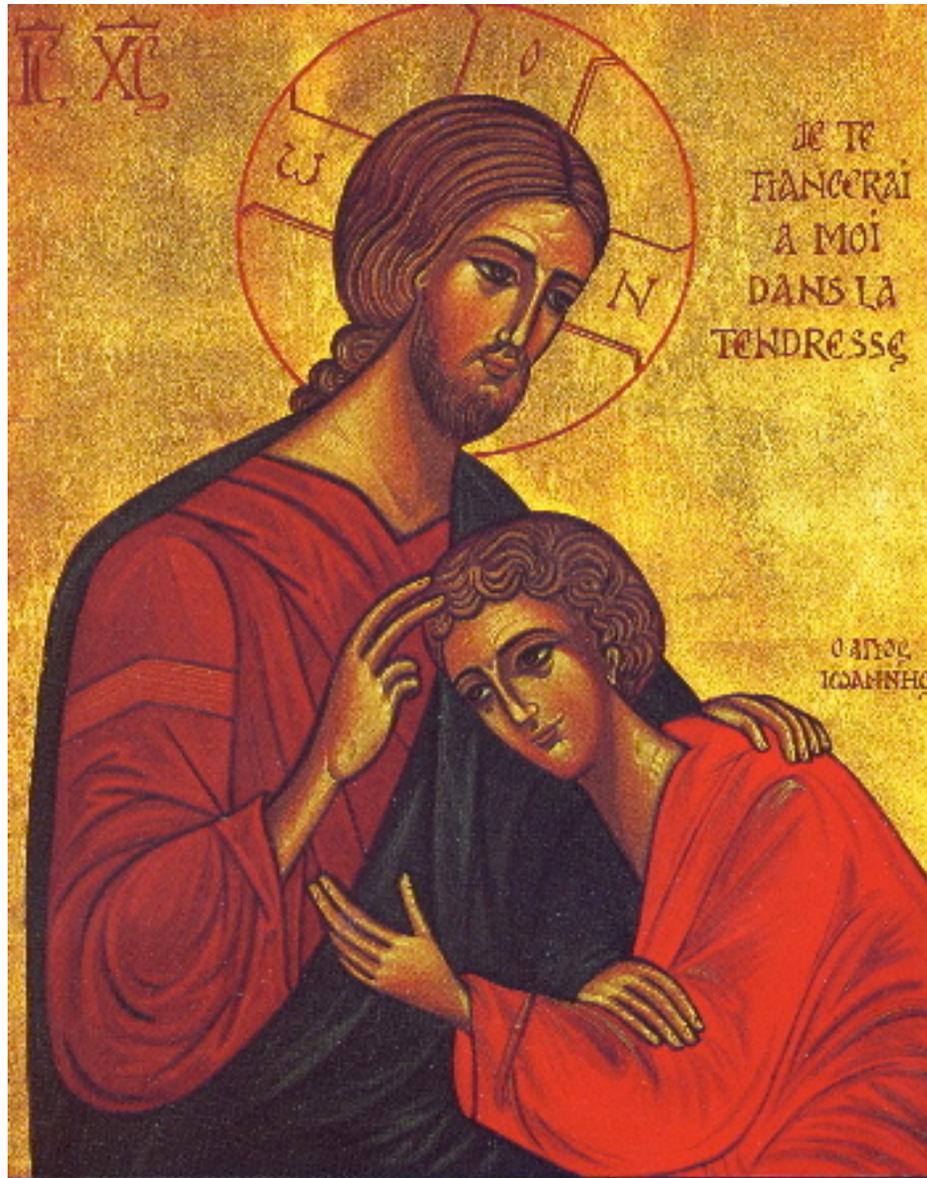
- 4th December 1965 - Paul VI saying Goodbye to the ecumenical observers in Rome. The Pope concludes with a parable taken from a Russian writer, Vladimir Soloviev, who, in 1896, had chosen to be received into full communion with the Catholic Church. He tells the story of a philosopher who visited a monastery seeking spiritual direction. Late into the night, at the close of their conversation, he left the monk's cell, but was unable to locate his own room, so he paced up and down the corridor awaiting the dawn.

The night was long and drear, but at last it was over and with the first light of dawn the tired philosopher easily recognised the door to his own cell - a door he had passed time and time again throughout the night. That is often the way with seekers after the truth. Awake, they pass it by without seeing it, until a ray of light from the divine Wisdom makes its disclosure as easy as it is consoling. The truth is near, beloved brethren. may a ray of divine light enable us to recognise the blessed door. This is our hope as we kneel now together in prayer at the tomb of Saint Paul.

Gerard Hughes, from 'God in all things'

'I was discovering that the ultimate test of true faith was no longer conformity to a specific creed, to church teaching and to church discipline, important though they are. I was becoming aware that the test of true faith lay in the extent that we allow God to be the God of love and compassion to us, and through us to everyone we encounter. The unity that we seek is the unity of a life lived together in love and compassion. Christians who exercise compassion are thus more likely to experience a sense of unity with compassionate people of whatever belief or disbelief than with members of their own denomination who fail to live compassionately. God is not a set of doctrines, nor a form of worship, but the source of all life and all love.

‘The teachings of our churches, our forms of worship and our laws are important, but they are a means to an end, not ends in themselves. They are means to enable us to experience God as the God of love and compassion. Once we know God in this way, we are then enabled to be loving and compassionate to others. This is being a disciple. This is following Christ.’



Yogananda

In this your temple
With your own hand,
Light the lamp of your love.
Turn my darkness into light.
Turn my darkness into light.



Breath of heaven