

NASCANTUR IN ADMIRATIONE

I.

To let things be born in wonder:
this is the foundation of rich human life,
in which creativity is itself first a “conceiving”
before it is a “bringing-forth” into this world.

Is not a little child herself conceived and born...
and not a project of human planning and invention,
the “making” of an autonomous human will
and a possessive human mind, fabricating?

Yes, for a child to be welcomed into this world
requires that she is conceived and born of childlikeness,
for only the spirit of childhood can welcome children,
recognizing them as an undeserved, pure gift.

A world that is grown old and “mature” in autonomy,
sees self-determination and the ability to produce
as the true perfection of human life...
and therefore has no place for children,
who are powerless and dependent,
and can give only what they first receive.

What such a world has forgotten
is that anything worthwhile in this world
must first be received before it is given,
and conceived before it is made.

Indeed, it lives in an artificial “technocracy,”
an alter-world that cannot stand receptivity,
for this means that we do not belong to ourselves,
but must receive, unceasingly, from Another.

“Adult” autonomy sees receptivity as a burden,
a sign of infantile dependence on external truths,
but because of this it loses the ability to go deeply
into the depths of reality—
speaking beauty, goodness, and truth.

The childlike heart (which thus becomes truly mature)
recognizes freedom precisely in receptivity,
in the ability to welcome all things as gift
and to live according to their radiant, inner truth.

II.

A child is conceived, and not “made,”
and grows organically in the womb,
in utter dependency—
and thereby grows, precisely,
into the freedom of communion with others,
and communion with the gift-ness of reality,

always sustaining as a gratuitous expression of Love.

The child thus knows how to receive, to welcome,
in trusting simplicity of heart before the truth.
The child knows how to play, to rejoice,
in the beauty of each succeeding moment.

There is no need to grasp, to control,
to utilize every moment for some other end,
and to possess space and time
for the sake of making things of it.

Rather, the childlike heart *abides*
in the heart of time and space
—in the sacred meaning of each moment—
allowing them to unfold their inner secret,
the hidden heartbeat of Eternity alive in them.

And this filial receptivity *conceives*
and bears the meaning deep within the heart,
rejoicing in it, resting in it, playing in its truth,
nurturing it in communion, as it, in turn, nurtures.

Thus the childlike can *give birth*
to truly beautiful, good, and holy things,
for it simply gives what it has first received,
and creates only what it has first conceived.

For it shelters and cherishes in the womb
the gift that comes ceaselessly from without,
and in this way learns the true inventiveness of love,
the creativity that springs from playful receptivity.

III.

The Son can do nothing of his own accord,
but only what he sees his Father doing;
for whatever the Father does,
that the Son does likewise.

For the Father loves the Son tenderly
and shows him all that he himself is doing—
he unveils his very being before the Son
as a complete and total gift, gratuitous.

And the Son, as the eternal Child of God,
receives this gift in the freedom of dependency
and the maturity of childlike receptivity,
and thus can give himself back to the Father
in the liberty and strength of adult love.

The whole of the “maturity” of the Trinity
—what a mysterious, and unexpected truth!—
is contained within the childlike playfulness

which marks the very nature of the divine life.

This is because, for God, to act is to play;
and his work is identical with his rest.
The mystery of playfulness, of repose,
and the wonder in which the Son is eternally born,
is the eternal life of the Father,
and of his Beloved, whom he loves in the Spirit.

For the whole movement of self-giving
that surges forever as the very heartbeat of God,
is that movement of wonder and awe, that cries out:
How good and beautiful you are, my love!

Therefore, the Son is not the only childlike one
who lives in the bosom of the Trinity.
No, the Father also is like a child,
in the spirit of his humble joy before the Son.

Even as the eternal Origin of the Son himself,
he is also the One whose self-outpouring
(the very eternal begetting of his Fatherhood!)
is a responsive love to the beauty of his Child.

What a mystery is this!
That the Father's eternal begetting of the Son
is itself both the first movement, and a response
to the One whom he begets in love.

For eternity does not divide these up,
but bears them together harmoniously
in the fullness of the life of God...
as the Father and the Son behold one another,
and ceaselessly cry out with joy:
I love you!

They give themselves to one another
in a movement of receptivity to the other's gift.
They receive in giving and give in receiving,
a Gift that communicates all that they are...
and thus binds them together eternally
in an ecstasy of joy,
and in perfect mutual indwelling.

But this very movement of mutual giving,
the very space of their encounter and their love...
who is this but the Womb of the Spirit,
the vibrant Joy of the Trinity, shared by all?

For the Spirit is the Gift of the Father and the Son,
and the Kiss in which they are united.
He, too, thus, is childlike, rejoicing to be gift,
and letting himself be given, giving himself too.

These three Persons in ceaseless relationship...
this Family of Love, filled with the vividness of Life!
Such tenderness, such sensitivity...
in which every gift is a reception,
and every reception a loving gift.

Holy Trinity, the source of all Beauty,
the heart of all Goodness, and the eternal Truth...
draw us, your beloved children, into your embrace,
and shelter us there eternally.

Take us up, dear and loving God,
into the movement of mutual self-giving
for which we have been created by you,
so that, receiving and responding,
we may experience the joyful intimacy
in which our hearts, alone, are at rest.