

Fr. Perozich comments —

It's all Jesus, faith in His Holy Name, and salvation through Him in the sacramental life of the Catholic Church.

Why waste time on synods and travels which speak of everything but him?

Does ‘Divine Inspiration Inhabit Every Faith’?

Fr. Thomas G. Weinandy, OFM, Cap.

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Pope Francis has made three seriously misleading statements recently. On September 13th, prior to leaving Singapore, he spoke to an interreligious group of young people at a Catholic junior college. He stated: “All religions are a path to arrive at God.” He elaborated: “I will use an analogy, they are like different languages that express the divine.”

He encouraged the young people of various religions to dialogue with one another. He noted: “There’s only one God, and each of us has a language to arrive at God. Some are Sikh, Muslim, Hindu, Christian, and they are different paths [to God].” Later, on September 17th, in a video message to an interreligious youth conference in Tirana, Albania, Pope Francis praised religious diversity as “a gift from God.”

More recently, on September 24th, the Vatican released a statement that Pope Francis sent to an interreligious gathering for peace in Paris sponsored by the Sant’Egidio Community. Here he wrote of the importance of divine inspiration. “We need to keep meeting, to weave bonds of fraternity, and to allow ourselves to be guided by the divine inspiration present in every faith.” The

Italian renders it as the “divine inspiration [that] inhabits every faith.” Pope Francis wants to be pastoral and ecumenical. Nonetheless, as he is frequently wont to do, his statements are ambiguous, and can easily lead to confusion.

While Vatican II did note, in its Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra aetate*), that **“The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and good in these religions,”** the Council did not say that all religions were of equal salvific value. Moreover, except for Christianity and Judaism, other religions are, therefore, not inspired by the Holy Spirit. And thus, they contain error; error that locks those who hold such beliefs in darkness, a darkness from which it is difficult to escape.

Most importantly, to declare in an unnuanced way, that “all religions are a path to God,” and so inspired, is to give voice to the words of the Devil. Such assertions insult the singularity of Jesus as the Son of God incarnate, and that in him alone does one find salvation. The Devil rejoices when Jesus is degraded and demeaned, for he cannot tolerate the truth that Jesus is the universal Savior and definitive Lord.

Importantly, unlike Jesus, the founders of other religions do not save from sin and the curse of death. Nor do they provide an enhanced relationship with God. The founders of other religions, such as Mohammed and Buddha, as “prophets,” simply provide knowledge whereby one can relate to God “properly.” Except for Judaism and Christianity, all other religions are, therefore, gnostic by nature. They dispel ignorance by providing what is thought to be saving knowledge.



The Triumph of St. Thomas Aquinas by Benozzo Gozzoli, c. 1450-75 [Louvre Paris]. Aquinas, flanked by Aristotle and Plato, overthrows Muslim scholar Averroes (at his feet), whom he respected but ultimately rejected.

In its 2000 Declaration *Dominus Iesus*, the then-Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, wished to identify flawed misunderstandings and erroneous conceptions of Jesus in relation to other “religious traditions of the world,” which risked compromising “the evangelizing mission of the Church.” Thus, *Dominus Iesus* professed, in accordance with Sacred Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church, that Jesus, as the Father’s only begotten Son, is alone the fullness of divine revelation who singularly possesses the completeness of divine truth.

Likewise, being the Father’s Spirit-anointed Son, **Jesus taught the Gospel of salvation and through his saving passion and sacrificial death reconciled all to his Father. The Father, in the love and power of the Holy Spirit, raised Jesus from the dead, thus liberating mankind from sin’s curse.**

These conjoined saving acts on the part of Jesus and of his Father, both of whom acted in the Holy Spirit, established Jesus as the preeminent Savior of all, and the sole Lord of both Heaven and Earth. Consequently, *Dominus Iesus* declared that **“Jesus Christ has a significance and a value for the human race and its history, which is unique and singular, proper to him alone, exclusive, universal, and absolute.”**

The singularity of Jesus Christ, as the Father’s Son, is also made manifest in another way. **Only in being personally united to Jesus, as the risen Savior and universal Lord, do men and women share in his holiness, the very life of the Holy Spirit, and so come to live in communion with his Father as the Father’s children.**

Thus, not only does the death and the resurrection make Jesus unique in his manner of existence as Savior and Lord, but it

also allows men and women to live, in a singular manner, in communion with him as their Savior and Lord. There is no relationship similar to the relationship between Christ and the believer. It is unique.

This mystery revealed by God the Father, both as to the uniqueness of Jesus his Son and as to mankind's invitation to live in communion with Him, is therefore singularly Christian and distinguishes Christianity from all other religious traditions, which are not divinely inspired. The Father did not will all religions, nor did he inspire them. What He willed is the Incarnation of His Son, Jesus Christ, so that all might be saved through Him.

By saying that all religions are Spirit-inspired paths to God, Pope Francis not only insulted Jesus in whose name alone is found salvation, but he also contradicted St. Paul's proclamation. God the Father has "bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:9-11)

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