

ANSWERING BASIC QUESTIONS OF FAITH "FROM ZERO TO THE EUCHARIST"

Taken from the Italian series presented by Friar Volantino.



EVERY LAST THURSDAY
of EACH MONTH at 6.30 pm
BEGINNING THURSDAY 27th OF MARCH

OUR LADY OF THE HOLY ROSARY CATHOLIC CHURCH
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Catechesis No. 3

WHY BE CHRISTIAN?

Respecting Jews, Muslims, etc...

- Why listen to *Mary the Mother of Jesus*? - 9.
To gear up ones pace towards heaven.
 - Why recognize the *Body of Jesus*
in the *Living Eucharist*? - 8.
 - Why feed on the *Eucharist*? - 7.
 - Why confess oneself with a *Catholic Priest*? - 6.
When God sees our hearts all the same?
 - Why go to *Church*? - 5.
Rather than pray at home.
 - Why be *Catholic*? - 4.
Respecting Orthodox, Protestants, and Jehovah's W., etc.
 - Why be *Christian*? - 3.
 - Why and How to trust the *S. Scripture*? - 2.
Respecting Jews, Buddhists, Muslims, etc.
 - Why and How to believe in *God*? - 1.
 - Why is there *Suffering*? - 0.
- ↑

In these evenings, we'll read and try to explain some passages of the

- **Word of God (AT, NT)**
- **Teaching of the Catholic Church (from the Fathers of Contemporaneity)**
- **Personal experiences ...**

Introduction:

- Why? (Cf. Jn 14, 6)
- And how should we dialogue with them? Cf. Jn 10, 16 and the Contemporary Magisterium that here follows:

Pope Paul IV

- 1.1 the three introductive ways to the dialogue of Scriptural origin in "Ecclesiam Suam".
- 1.2 Condition and Characteristics for a serene dialogue.
- 1.3 Circular structure of dialogue "ecclesiocentric".

Vatican Council II

- 2.1 Rays of Truth also in the other religions in "Nostra Aetate"
- 2.2 Some directives on inter-religious dialogue beginning with the "Dignitatis Humanae"

Pope John Paul II

- 3.1 The spirit also "extra-ecclesiam" (out of the church) in "Redemptoris Missio"
- 3.2 The spirit prepares the mission in "Dominum et Vivificantem"
- 3.3 Search the treasures of religions in "Redemptor Hominis"
- 3.4 Stepping beyond the "Extra Ecclesia nulla Salus" with "Sine Ecclesia nulla Salus"

Pope Benedict XVI

- 4.1 Christ the only Savior for all humankind – in the Church and by means of Her.
- 4.2 Always highlight the high road of our Christian identity."
- 4.3 Jesus Christ is the apex of the story of salvation, also in the dialogue with other religions

Word of God and other Religious Fonts

BIBLE (Christians)

The Old Testament

1. "May -your Way- may be known on earth, -your Salvation- among all nations!" (Ps [66],1-3).
2. "I will demonstrate my salvation to those who walk the way of uprightness – Says the Lord" (Cf. Ps [49],23).
3. "They will 'all' call upon the name of the Lord, and will 'all' serve him under the same yoke" (Cf. Zeph 3,9).
4. "Turn to me, 'all nations' of the earth and be saved, for I am God; there is no other! (Cf. Is 45,22).
5. "There shall be one shepherd for them all" (Ez 37,24).
6. "I will make you a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth." (Is 49,6).
7. "All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, Lord; they will give glory to your name". (Ps [85],9).
8. "All the Gentiles shall know that there is One who redeems and who saves." (1 Mac 4,11).

The New Testament

9. "There is one lawgiver and judge, He who is able to save or to destroy" (Jms 4,12).
10. "There is also one mediator between God and the human race, Christ Jesus, himself human" (1Tim 2,5).
11. "There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved" (Act 4,12).

12. "I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd!" (cf. **Jn 10,16**).
13. "Until all attain to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to the state of man's perfection, to the extent of the full maturity of Christ" (cf. **Ef 4,13**).
 "He has made known to us the mystery of his will [...] a plan (ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ - that is) to sum up all things in Christ, in heaven and on earth." (cf. **Ef 1, 9-10**).

TaNak (Jews)

Nevim

14. "But you, Bethlehem of Ephrathah too small to be among the clans of Judah, From you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel; Whose origin is from of old, from ancient times" (**Mi 5,1**) (**Mt 2,1** "Jesus was born in Bethlehem" the ruler of Israel).
15. "Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and have you rise from them, O my people!" (**Ez 37, 13**).
 --- Jesus came and he resurrected Lazarus (**Jn 11,14. 43-44**); the son of the widow of Nain (**Lk 7, 11-17**) and also the daughter of Giarus (cf. **Mk 5, 35-43**), so then why haven't many recognized him?

Koran (Muslims)

Sure

16. "When they were given the example of the son of Mary, your people turn away [...] saying: 'our gods aren't better than him?' [...] When Jesus came with evident proof saying 'I came to you with Wisdom to show you part of what you weren't in agreement with. Fear God and obey me!' says Jesus" (**S. XLIII, 66, 'Testo-Fronte' translations from the Italian version care of G. MANDEL**)
17. "Oh people of the Book! You will do nothing good until you put into practice the Torah and the Gospel" (cf. **Sura V,68, translations from the Italian version care of A. BAUSANI**)¹
18. -----
19. "Sure, we have killed the Messiah Jesus son of Mary, messenger of God'. Well then, nor did they kill him nor did they crucify him; like so it seemed to them" (cf. **S. IV, 157, 'Testo-Fronte' translations from the Italian version care of G. MANDEL**).
 --- The much discussed Sura IV, 157 of the Koran just read, would seem to say that really Jesus did not die on the Cross. But are we sure that the text wants to say that? We'll see better a few lines ahead. Anyhow we can say for your information that on the base of this above said passage of the Koran and various interpretations, in the Islamic tradition gave birth to the following hermeneutical exegesis, in which Jesus instead of having died on the Cross, would have ascended directly into heaven before his death (like Elijah and Enoch), but out rightly at the end of times (given that in the Sura XIX,33 it's also written that Jesus had to die) he will come again, then he will die and then later Resurrect and ascend into heaven. All this is absurd, but, because it's also written in the Koran, the opposite to what they had interpreted, or rather:
20. "Oh Jesus, I will make you die, and then I will raise you up to me, and I will purify you from the unfaithful" (**S. III, 55**)

Sruti/Smiriti (Hinduisms)

Veda (where here we read about natural salvation)

21. "Oh earth, be rich in oblations: this is the part of you that in us. Save (free) these and those from sin, Greetings!" (**ATHARAVEDA [4TH Veda], magical hymns VI, 84.2, care of Chatia Orlandi e Saverio Sani, Edit. UTET, Torin 1992, pg. 173.**)
22. "In her (the apamarga; a plant used in magical rites) who is truly victorious, who prevents malediction, the conqueror of unwanted leaves, I called all the herbs saying: "That she save us from this evil" (**IBIDEM, IV, 17.2, pg. 199**).

Upanishad (where here we read their development of soteriology [salvation])

23. The citadel of the eleven doors (maybe the 11 organs of the body [cf. note 11.11,1 of the present citation]) belongs to the non-born, to He who has the fixed intelligence [that could possibly recall Jesus, the Logos = Reason etc.. given that he hadn't yet been born]. Having contemplated these things, the wise no longer suffers, and is saved from ignorance, freeing himself definitively and from the rebirth!" (**UPANIŠHAD, Kathà, II,II,1 Translations from the Italian version care of Raphael, Edit. Bompiani, Milan 2010, pg.847**).

Bagavaghita (where here we read a similarity of the 'Justinian' logic of the Verb sown in all cultures)

24. "The glorious Lord says...: "Man loses himself to the door of hell for these three types: Passions, rage and greed. Therefore man, abandon this triad! Freed from these doors of darkness, oh son, man accomplishes his own good in the aim of the reaching the ultimate goal. He who, rejecting the precepts of the doctrinal texts, living only to satisfy his

¹ Another translation: "You are founded on nothing until you compare yourselves with the Torah and the Gospel"(cf. S. V,68 translations from the Italian version care of G. MANDEL)

own desires, will not reach perfection, nor happiness, not the ultimate goal. Therefore let the doctrinal text be for you the instrument of knowledge in determining what one should or shouldn't do!"...

25. *The god Kṛṣṇa supposedly said "I am [...] the seed of all beings, also this I am [...]. I only partially exposed to you the deployment of my power!" (BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ, the song of the Glorious Lord, X, 38-39, care of Piano Stefano, Edit. San Paolo, Milan 1994, glossary, pg. 201).*

--- Behold here, the 'Logos Spermaticos', the 'semina verbi' of St. Justin, that manifests itself in every culture and likewise every religion, like here in this one, we clearly see the insufficient nature of the 'extra-Christian' revelation, where we read - that not everything has been revealed-, instead when the Holy Spirit will come to us, it will reveal us all the Truth (Cf. Jn 16, 13) when regarding the Salvific Truth! Rather, it's already been revealed to us at Pentecost more than 2000 years ago..

Tri-pitaka (Buddhism)

The Long Sutra (in Suttapitaka)

26. *"Sakko... king of the gods with his followers... of thirty three gods... said: 'I am disciple of the Sublime... until the final total illumination' (and then he said repeating three times to the Sublime) – 'Honor to the Holy and Perfect Sublime... Honor to the Holy and Perfect Sublime... Honor to the Holy and Perfect Sublime!'" (Cf. BUDDHIST CANON, Long discourses [Diigha Nikaaya], XXI, Sakapana Suttanta, The questions of Sakko, king of the gods, No. 1,8. II,7.10, care of Frola Eugenio, Edit. Laterza, Bari 1961, Pg. 637. 640).*

--- Therefore here, also the king of the Buddhists, or the "god of the gods" of the Buddhists, according to the words of Buddha, be illuminated by the 3 times Holy One! (Cf. Is 6,3), like so also Buddha who isn't the light but only the 'illuminated one', with all respect that we have to always give towards other faiths.

27. *"Oh monks, what is the noble truth over the way that leads to the end pain? It's the octuplet noble way oh monk, that is; upright opinion, upright intention, upright words, upright actions, upright ways, upright practice, upright knowledge, upright concentration [...]. Behold he, oh monk, who on these four pillars of knowledge, like so practicing for seven years, of these two fruits one fruit follows: oh the wisdom of the visible elements of the world, or to the knowledge of an existence without return" BUDDHIST CANON, Long discourses [Diigha Nikaaya], XXII, Satapatthana Suttanta, No. 19-22, the basis of knowledge, care of Frola Eugenio, Edit. Laterza, Bari 1961, Pgs. 628. 667).*

--- A true Buddhist at the difference of Buddha (who getting to the point couldn't encounter Jesus given that he hadn't yet come into history), if truly upright, will arrive to the true illumination in the Person of Jesus; the true light of the Cosmos (cf. Jn,12) and grace for excellence... given that already 400 hundred years before Buddha, our beloved David had already said: "Sun and shield is the Lord; He concedes grace and glory and refuses no good to those who walk with uprightness" (f. Ps [83],12)

The Medium Sutra (in Suttapitaka)

28. *"Who are you? (asked him a Brahmano) Are you a God? Are you a spirit, Are you a prophet, Are you an angel, Are you a type of devil?" he answered in his human wisdom: 'I'm not a divine being, nor a semi-god, nor a spirit, nor a human being; I am Buddha', that is, the illuminated one. Then, before the perplexity of some disciples and people, he continued to compare his personality to the lotus flowers, saying: 'As a blue, red or white lotus germinates in the mud and once it has reached the surface of the water, it finds itself spotlessly dry from the water; just like so, having been born and raised in this world, I have overcome the world and live spotless of the world. Therefore Brahmano, I am Buddha' (that is, the illuminated one). Some scholars say: It is interesting to note that to rise up over the surface and blossom to open itself, the noble lotus flower needs at least one ray of light and therefore from light from external to itself. Anthropologically therefore, the illumination of Buddha is not fruit of human strength, but is a supernatural intervention." (MAJHIMA MIKĀYA, III, 6, in: JAE-SUK LEE, the pilgrimage of Buddhism towards a greater reality. Avatamsaka sūtra of the Buddhist Mahāyāna, in ANCORA GIOVANNI (ed.), Avvento di Dio-esodo dell'uomo. The pilgrimage of faith, Ediz. Vivere In, Rome 2000, pg. 87).*

--- Therefore as an expert in matter and also that we've heard it from his own words, Buddha is not God, nor the Son of God (not even the Light of the world but only someone who elevated towards the light). Rather, on the contrary, Jesus who is the Light of the world, who descends from heaven to illuminate those who were in darkness (cf. Lk 1,79; Mt 4,16), and leads them freely to him.

BRIEF AND LONG SUTRA (suttapitaka)

29. *"Abandon the things of the past, abandon the future, abandon the things that are in between, the present, when it tends towards the other shore of being. – If your mind is free from every sense, you will no longer return to the cycle of rebirth an age!" (THE BUDDHIST CANON. Brief Discourse, Dhammapada, No. 346, care of Pio Filippini – Ronconi, Ediz. UTET, Torin 2004, pgs. 624-625).*
30. *"Who's reached the consummation of their existence, who no longer fears, who's thirst (of pleasures and evil desires) has disappeared, who's without stain, who's cut from the roots the goad of existence; of he, this*

is the last body (in which one be dressed with) [...], he has reached the last body, he will be called the Great wise man is great Man! (*Ibidem*, nn.351-352ss, pg. 141).

31. "He (the Great Man) as consequence of this action of his, will be able to accumulate it, repeat it, abandon into it – with the body's dissolve after death, will blessedly rise again into the blessed world [...] He will have passed through from there, having reached in this state, he had this sign of a great man.. And for such work of his, he reached the divine!" (Cf. **BUDDHIST CANON. Long Discourse** (Diigha Nikaaya), XXX Lakkhana Suttanta, the signs of a great man, No. 3-5, care of Eugenio Frola, Ediz. Laterza, Bari 1961, pgs. 890-891. (cf. **BUDDHIST CANON. Brief Discourse**, Dhammapada, No. 352-353, care of Pio Filippini - Ronconi, Ediz. UTET, Torin 2004, pgs. 141-142.).

Tao-Tsang (Taoism)

Tau-Te-Cing (Religious Taoism)

32. Lao-tzu: "Eliminate profit and therefore there'll no longer be thieves and brigands [...] Embrace the rough Wood!" (**TAO TE CING, No. 19**)
33. Lao-tzu: "The world has an origin, That is considered the mother of the world [...]. Entrust yourselves to the mother and up until death your person will not be in danger. Close the opening, bar the doors: up to the end your person will not run dry. Open the opening, increase you doing: up to the end your person will have no salvation" (**TAO TE CING, No. 52**)

Chuang-Tzu (Philosophical Taoism)

34. Chuang-tzu: "When one follows the Tao (the Way) in the world, he (the Taoist) will prosper together with all creation [...], he will cultivate virtues and.. after one thousand years, having had his fill of this world, he will go and ascend amongst the immortals, saddle the white clouds and reach the supremacy of the Emperor of Heaven where afflictions will not touch him and where people are forever freed from disaster" (**CHUANG-TZU, XII**).

The 4 Books - (Confucianism)

(The natural way of man as personal and social salvation)

The Dialogues

35. Confucius: "If you govern [...] desire what is good and the people will be good (or docile), just as when wind flows over the grass, it will certainly bow!" (**THE FOUR BOOKS OF CONFUCIUS, The Dialogues**, No. 297).
36. Confucius: "Three things are which the wise man has reverential fear: fear the decree of Heaven, fear great men, fear wise words. The vulgar man does not know the decree of Heaven and does not fear it, he is irreverent towards great men and makes fun of the words of the wise" (**THE FOUR BOOKS OF CONFUCIUS, The Dialogues**, No. 428)

The Invariable Means

37. Confucius: "The seasons and stars course happen together without either of them falling into disorder. This is such and therefore what makes heaven and earth so great! (Like so similarly) only the supreme holiness under heaven I capable of intelligent illumination and of insightful wisdom that concede guiding the peoples!" (**THE FOUR BOOKS OF CONFUCIUS, The Invariable Means**, No. 30-33).

(The moral way of man is for Confucians restructuration's of the way of heaven).

38. Mencius: "He who conforms himself to Heaven survives, he who opposes Heaven perishes" (**THE FOUR BOOKS OF CONFUCIUS, Meng-Tzu [Mencius]**, 1Vth Book, 68).
39. "Wan Chang says: 'Yao handed over the empire to Shun, is it like so?' 'no' replied Mencius. 'the Son of Heaven cannot give the empire to a man'. Wang Chang answered 'Very well then, but Shun had the empire. Who gave it to him?' Mencius replied 'Heaven gave it to him'. Wan Chang continued 'If Heaven gave it to him, it decreed it explicitly?' Mencius answered 'Heaven does not speak. It makes manifest its decree with the personal behavior and public activity (of his chosen one)..'" (**THE FOUR BOOKS OF CONFUCIUS, Meng-Tzu [Mencius]**, Vth Book, 127).

Word of God and other Religious Fonts

Patristic age

The Logos Spermatikos, the Verb of God (Jesus) has sown his seeds of truth though all cultures

40. Like so says St. Justine: "And (we know that) those of the Stoic school — since, so far as their moral teaching went, they were admirable, as were also the poets in some particulars, on account of the seed of reason [the Logos] implanted in every race of men — were hated and put to death, — Heraclitus for instance, and, among those of our own time, Musonius and others. For, as we intimated, the devils have always effected, that all those who anyhow live according to the verb and flee from evil, be hated. And it is nothing to be astonished if the devils are proved to cause those to be much

worse hated who live not according to a part only of the verb sower [among men], but by the knowledge and contemplation of the whole Verb, which is Christ. And these demons, having been shut up in eternal fire, shall suffer their just punishment and penalty. For if they are even now overthrown by men through the name of Jesus Christ, this is an intimation of the punishment in eternal fire which is to be inflicted on themselves and those who serve them. For thus did both all the prophets foretell, and our own teacher Jesus teach. (ST. JUSTINE, *Second Apology*, VIII, 1-3)

--- **Justine** (dying in 165 AD), is defined by *Fides et Ratio* the “pioneer” of positive encounters of philosophical thought also in the sign of a cautious discernment (cf. *Fides et Ratio*, No. 38), he insisted [...] that through the theory of the “semian Verbi” that the Spirit of God sows threw out history, fragments of truth that have been completed in Christ whom is the Logos, the fullness of truth (A. SABETTA, *Handouts: Faith and Reason. A Historical analysis and prospective for our present time*. Faculty of Theology, PUL - II cycle, course 10511. A.A. 2012-13, pg. 12).

--- **Clement** of Alexandria affirms that in all people, above all in those who’s time is spent working on reason (or rather philosophers), “has been poured a certain divine effluvium (scent)”, and that is, there is some sort of divine presence, we can say comparable to the “seeds of truth” of which Justine speaks of, such a presence thanks to the philosophers who were able to admit that only one God exists, immune to corruption and generation, destined to the material reality (VI, 68,2-3). Precisely because they received some “sparks of the divine Logos”, the Greeks have made some accents of truth heard; and couldn’t have been diversely, because without the Logos of the truth, it’s like wanting to walk without feet (VII, 74,7-75,1) (A. SABETTA, *Faith and Reason. A Historical analysis and prospective for our present time*. Faculty of Theology, PUL - II cycle, course 10511. A.A. 2012-13, p. 27).

The Truth for excellence through be searched above all amongst Christians

41. “The true religion is not sought amongst the confusion of pagans, the doings of heretics, the weariness of the schismatic, nor in the blindness of others... but only amongst those who are called Christians”. (ST. AUGUSTINE, *The True Religion*, V.9)
42. “There is no doubt, God concedes the knowledge of the Gospel to those whom his mercy has decided to pull out of damnation, and they will believe after having listened to the Good News” (ST. AUGUSTINE, *De correptione et Gratia*, c. 7, in HUGON EDOUARD, Op. Cit, Pg. 61)

Modern age

The divine character of Christians

43. “Christianity is a “revealed Revelation”; it’s a definitive message of God to mankind, communicated distinctly through the instruments that He’s chosen [...]; and therefore, it must be positively recognized, embraced and conserved by people as true, for the reason that it is divine [...] as an absolutely certain knowledge, in a sense that nothing else could be as certain, because it derives from Him, who can’t fool nor be fooled” (BLESSED NEWMAN, *Grammar of Assent*, Christian Classics Inc. Westminster Md. 1973, pg. 387).

Post-modern (or contemporary) age

The 4 characteristics of a serious interreligious dialogue

44. THE 4 CHARACTERS: “Dialogue, therefore, is a recognized method of the apostolate. It is a way of making spiritual contact. It should however have the following characteristics: Clarity before all else; the dialogue demands that what is said should be intelligible [...]. Our dialogue must be accompanied by that meekness which Christ bade us learn from Himself [...]. Confidence is also necessary; confidence not only in the power of one’s own words, but also in the good will of both parties to the dialogue [...]. Finally, the prudence of a teacher who is most careful to make allowances for the psychological and moral circumstances of his hearer”. (PAUL VI, *Encyclical Ecclesiam Suam*, 81)

Vatican Council Declarations on the Jewish faith:

45. “As Israel according to the flesh, which wandered as an exile in the desert, was already called the Community of God (Ne 13, 1; Nm 20, 4; Dt 23, 1), so likewise the new Israel.. according to the Spirit - which while living in this present age goes in search of a future and abiding city (cf. Heb 13, 14) is called the Church of Christ !(cf. At 20, 28).. For He has [...] established the Church so that for each “and all” it may be the visible sacrament of this saving unity. (IInd VATICAN COUNCIL, *Dogmatic Constitution Lumin Gentium*, No. 9)
46. “As Holy Scripture testifies, Jerusalem did not recognize the time of her visitation, nor did the Jews in large number, accept the Gospel; indeed not a few opposed its spreading. Nevertheless, God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their Fathers; He does not repent of the gifts He makes or of the calls He issues-such is the witness of the Apostle. In company with the Prophets and the same Apostle, the Church awaits that day, known to God alone, on which all peoples will address the Lord in a single voice and “serve him shoulder to shoulder” (Soph. 3:9)[...] The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men. Indeed, she proclaims, and ever must proclaim

Christ "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), in whom men may find the fullness of religious life, in whom God has reconciled all things to Himself." (VATICAN COUNCIL II, Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, No. 2,4)

Vatican Council Declarations on the Muslim faith:

47. "But the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator. In the first place amongst these there are the Muslims, who, professing to hold the faith of Abraham, along with us adore the one and merciful God, who on the last day will judge mankind. [...] Whatever good or truth is found amongst them is looked upon by the Church as a preparation for the Gospel [...] so that they may finally have life. But often men, deceived by the Evil One, have become vain in their reasoning's and have exchanged the truth of God for a lie [...] Wherefore to promote the glory of God and procure the salvation of all of these, and mindful of the command of the Lord, "Preach the Gospel to every creature (Mk 16,15)" (II VATICAN COUNCIL, Dogmatic constitution *Lumen Gentium*, n. 16).
48. "Muslims [...] have the right to receive our humble witness and firm fervor of Jesus Christ. To be able to give it with persuasive strength, it be needed though, a serious effort [...]. This dialogue presumes a solid knowledge of one's own Catholic Faith!" (BENEDICT XVI, *The Roman Observer*, 13-14.11.2006).

Vatican Council Declarations on Hinduism:

49. "In Hinduism, men contemplate the divine mystery and express it through an inexhaustible abundance of myths and through searching philosophical inquiry. They seek freedom from the anguish of our human condition either through ascetical practices or profound meditation or a flight to God with love and trust. The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men. Indeed, she proclaims, and ever must proclaim Christ "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), in whom men may find the fullness of religious life, in whom God has reconciled all things to Himself." (VATICAN COUNCIL II, Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, No. 2,4)

--- KARL RAHNER affirms that their sacredness derives from the having codified the experience of the religious search of a people, not deprived of the action of the Holy Spirit, that works in all peoples and in all religions (KARL RAHNER, in Thesis of Licentiate: *La salvezza (nelle fonti) delle religioni orientali a confronto con il cristianesimo* of Fr. V.V., A.A. PUL 2012-2013, p. 45)

Vatican Council Declarations on Buddhism:

50. "Again, Buddhism, in its various forms, realizes the radical insufficiency of this changeable world; it teaches a way by which men, in a devout and confident spirit, may be able either to acquire the state of perfect liberation, or attain, by their own efforts or through higher help, supreme illumination. Likewise, other religions found everywhere try to counter the restlessness of the human heart, each in its own manner, by proposing "ways," comprising teachings, rules of life, and sacred rites [...]. The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men. Indeed, she proclaims, and ever must proclaim Christ "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), in whom men may find the fullness of religious life, in whom God has reconciled all things to Himself." (VATICAN COUNCIL II, Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, No. 2)

--- For Romano Guardini Buddha shows the Way, that even without him subsists... Christianity rather, is constituted by Jesus, a historical Personality that determines everything (Cfr. ROMANO GUARDINI, in: *Licentiate Thesis, La salvezza (nelle fonti) delle religioni orientali a confronto con il cristianesimo* di Fr. V.V., A.A. PUL 2012-2013, p. 57).

Vatican Council Declarations on Taoism:

51. "Asia is also the cradle of the major religions of the world, in which also is [...] Taoism [...]. the Church has the deepest respect for these traditions and tries to entwine a sincere dialogue with their followers. But the religious values that they teach – wait for their fulfillment – in Jesus Christ!" (JOHN PAUL II, Post Synod Apostol. Exhort., *Ecclesia in Asia*, No. 6)

--- JAE SUK LEE says that the ultimate aim of Taoism is union with the Tao. In Taoism, salvation would be union with the Tao, or rather with 'the all' (Cf. JAE SUK LEE, in: *Licentiate Thesis, La salvezza (nelle fonti) delle religioni orientali a confronto con il cristianesimo* di Fr. V.V., A.A. PUL 2012-2013, p. 60).

--- Jae Suk Lee says that the Tao is expressed as mother, so far as the First Cause from which all beings have originated. (Cf. JAE SUK LEE, in: *Licentiate Thesis, La salvezza (nelle fonti) delle religioni orientali a confronto con il cristianesimo* di Fr. V.V., A.A. PUL 2012-2013, p. 60).

--- MALEK says that Taoism is the sole religion really Chinese that concentrates itself on salvation in a religious sense. In it, it's the thought (doctrine and meditation) and action (ritual) are always turned towards redemption. (Cf. MALEK, in: Licentiate Thesis, *La salvezza (nelle fonti) delle religioni orientali a confronto con il cristianesimo* di Fr. V.V., A.A. PUL 2012-2013, p. 60).

--- MALEK says even more that in Taoism, man abstains from every conscious aspiration "wu-wei", non-involvement. (It consists in the non-involvement of one's own will, but acting in the natural will of the Tao just as water does not rise upwards but descends down to the base, not soiling but quenching thirst) Therefore it is non-involvement according to ourselves, to reach the Tao, or rather the Way (of Life), with an intuitive (meditative) and at the same time ritual walk. When man in the end has reached union with the Tao and therefore the Way (given that Tao means Way), they have reached their aim. (Cf. MALEK, in: Licentiate Thesis, *La salvezza (nelle fonti) delle religioni orientali a confronto con il cristianesimo* di Fr. V.V., A.A. PUL 2012-2013, p. 60).

Vatican Council Declarations on Confucianism:

--- "As for Confucius (551-479 B.C.), "Master Kong", he attempts, on the occasion of a period of profound crisis, to restore order by respect for rites, founded on filial piety that must be at the heart of all social life. [...] in which the ritualized relation (the li), which places man into the natural order, [...] The Fathers of the Church, however, do not purely and simply adopt the Stoic doctrine. They modify and develop it. On the one hand, the anthropology of biblical inspiration, which sees man as the *imago Dei* – the full truth of which is manifested in Christ – forbids reducing the human person to a simple element of the cosmos: called to communion with the living God, the person transcends the whole cosmos while integrating himself in it. On the other hand, the harmony of nature and reason no longer rests on an immanentist vision of a pantheistic cosmos but on the common reference to the transcendent wisdom of the Creator." (**INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGICAL COMMISSION**, *In Search of a Universal Ethic: A New Look at the Natural Law*, N. 15.26. 113-114.116).

--- MALÈK says that the Chinese thought is certainly addressed to earthly things, but this attention to earthly things does not exclude the divine, the transcendent and salvation (Cf. MALEK, in: License-Thesis of Friar VV, *Salvation (in the sources) of Eastern religions in comparison with Christianity*, AA PUL 2012-2013, pg. 63).

--- MALÈK also says that Confucianism is to be compared to a way that everyone can go if he wants .. The destination one reaches on this way would be simply the attainment of the fullness of human maturity. The means to achieve the full humanity that is "a human salvation," is the knowledge of what is right and the practice of what one has learned, in order to reach perfection of oneself (Cf. Malek, in: License-Thesis of Friar VV, *Salvation (in the sources) of Eastern religions in comparison with Christianity*, AA PUL 2012-2013, pg. 63).

--- Only Mencius 372-289 B.C. - Continues MALÈK - created or resumed the tradition of the periodical return of a savior in the world. But in the Neo-Confucianism, however, were canceled all hopes in a redemption from beyond (aldilà) (Cf. Malek, in: License-Thesis of Friar VV, *Salvation (in the sources) of Eastern religions in comparison with Christianity*, AA PUL 2012-2013, pg. 64).

--- As the new Confucians have a considerable willingness to discuss, then TU WEI MING starts off from a positive approach, that could be the following one: "What does it mean for a Confucian to be religious?" (Cf. TU WEI MING , in: License-Thesis of Friar VV, *Salvation (in the sources) of Eastern religions in comparison with Christianity*, AA PUL 2012-2013, pg. 64).

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

- *The story of an evangelization on the infallible judgment of God in regards to Religions..*
- *The story of a "flash" question at Assisi on the difference of the other religions..*

IN CONCLUSION

- Given that we've spoken about salvation in the other religions, we want to ask in the end: But when we say salvation, just what is it that we'll be saved from?
- To explain it in brief, or words that are less technical, ALL RELIGIONS, if they are truly followed with all one's heart and with honest sincerity, they are many paths that lead towards God, but not right into God (cf. *Jn 14, 6b*). They lead as if right up until the peak of a mountain, by where THE SOLE WAY or Road that leads right up into God (cf. *At 4,12*), and the name of this Road is Jesus Christ, in which is the only one who can say that it has in full the title : "Εγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ" and that is "I am the way, the truth and the life, 'no-one' comes to the Father except through me!" (cf. *Jn 14.6*). Rightly already written in the Old Testament when God affirmed about Himself: "Turn to me, all you countries of the earth – and you will be saved – because I am God; there is no other!" (cf. *Is 45, 22*)

IN SYNTHESIS

- In the last, if someone would continue to say "why are you Christian and not a Jew, Buddhist, Taoist, Confucian or Muslim?" and we like so would answer: "Because only Christ (other than having given us many signs of Certainty) has Resurrected from the dead, while the all others (with all respect) are dead!" Therefore: only a few words are needed for those who use their intelligence well! Amen!

NB. In regards to all the passages that we didn't read nor explain, if you're interested in having a deeper knowledge of the topic, according to God and the Church and experience ... you can make an appointment with us at the end of the teaching or through e-mail, and we'll come to your house as far as it's possible. We only have to coordinate and unite some people, who thirst for truth!. You find the e-mail on: www.poorfriars.net – with Christian love "Little Friars of Jesus and Mary".

Conceptual Map for inter-religious or ecumenical dialogue

(With Scriptural fonts) Prepared By Fr. Volantino

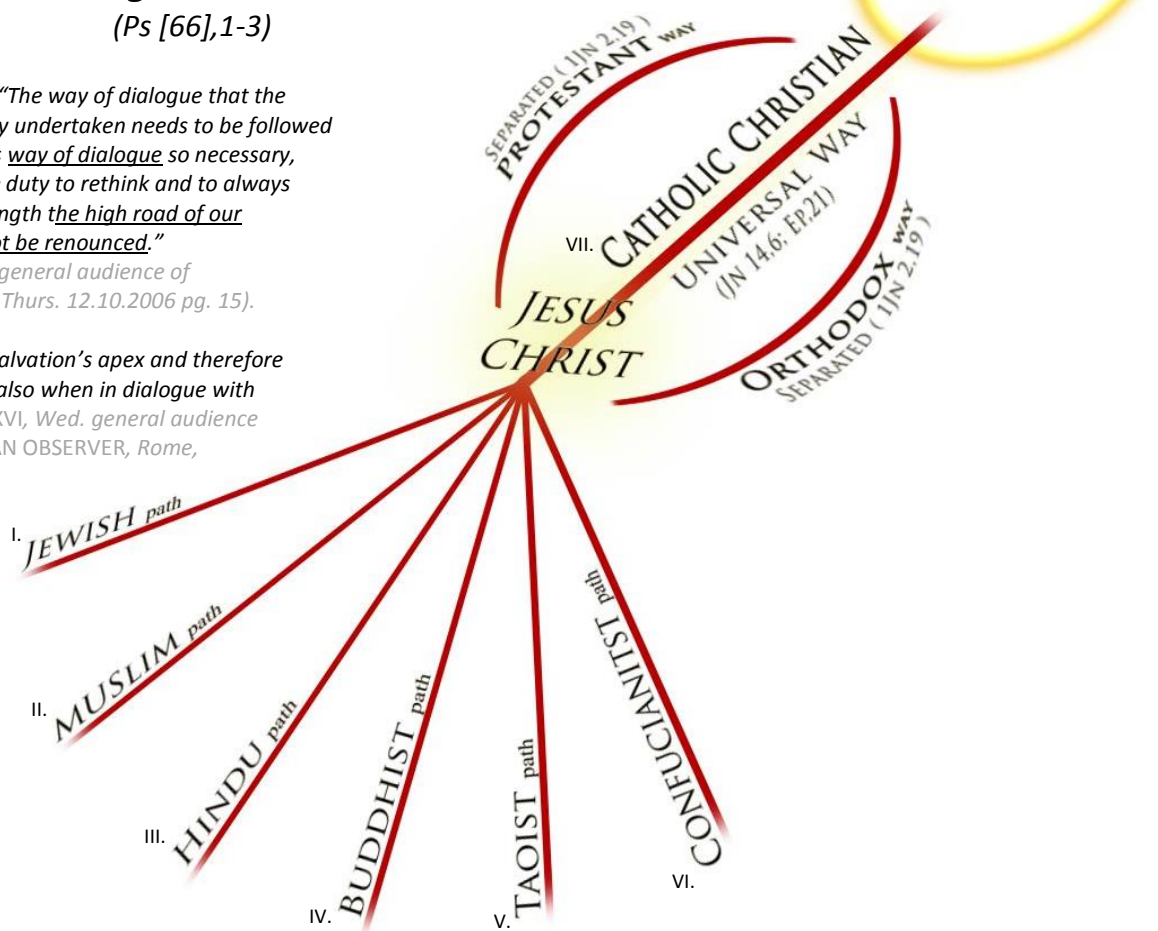
**“May -your Way- may be known on earth,
-your Salvation- among all nations!”**

(Ps [66],1-3)

Pope Benedict the XVI says: “The way of dialogue that the II Vatican Council has happily undertaken needs to be followed with firm constancy. But this way of dialogue so necessary, must not make us forget the duty to rethink and to always highlight with the same strength the high road of our Christian identity that cannot be renounced.”

(BENEDICT XVI, Wednesday general audience of 11. Feb. 2006, in AVVENIRE, Thurs. 12.10.2006 pg. 15).

“Jesus Christ is the story of salvation’s apex and therefore the true point of distinction also when in dialogue with other religions” (BENEDICT XVI, Wed. general audience of 8 Nov. 2006, in the ROMAN OBSERVER, Rome, Thurs. 09.11.2006)



- I. God says to the Jews: “You will know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves and brought you up out of your graves, my people”.(Ez 37:13)
- II. Jesus says in the Koran: “Oh people of the Book! You will do nothing good until you put into practice the Torah and the Gospel!”* (Cf. KORAN, Sura V,68, translations from the Italian version care of Bausani Alessandro, Edit, Radici BUR, Milan, 20094) (*Another translation: “You are founded on nothing until you compare yourselves with the Torah and the Gospel”(Cf. S. V,68 translations from the Italian version care of G. MANDEL)
- III. The god krsna supposedly said: “I am the seed of all beings, also this am I. I only partially exposed to you the deployment of my power!” (Cf. BHAGAVAD-GITA, *The song of the glorious Lord*, X 38-39, care of Piano Stefano, Edit. San Paolo, Milan 1994, glossary pg. 201)... Behold here, the ‘Logos Spermaticos’, the ‘semina verbi’ of St. Justin, that manifests itself in every culture and likewise every religion, like here in this one, we clearly see the insufficient nature of the ‘extra-Christian’ revelation, where we read - that not everything has been revealed-, instead when the Holy Spirit will come to us, it will reveal us all the Truth (Cf. Jn 16, 13) when regarding the Salvific Truth! Rather, it’s already been revealed to us at Pentecost more than 2000 years ago.
- IV. “Sakko... king of the gods with his followers... of thirty three gods... said: “I am disciple of the Sublime... until the final total illumination” (and then he said repeating three times to the Sublime) – “Honor to the Holy and Perfect Sublime... Honor to the Holy and Perfect Sublime... Honor to the Holy and Perfect Sublime!” (Cf. BUDDHIST CANON, *Long discourses [Diigha Nikaaya]*, XXI, *Sakapana Suttanta, The questions of Sakko, king of the gods*, No. I,8. II,7.10, care of Froila Eugenio, Edit. Laterza, Bari 1961, Pg. 637. 640), therefore here, also the king of the Buddhists, or the “god of the gods” of the Buddhists, according to the words of Buddha, be illuminated by the 3 times Holy One! (Cf. Is 6,3).
- V. Like so says he who the Taoists considered divine “Embrace the coarse wood and reduce your personal interests and passions!” (TAO TE CHING, No. 19 in *TAO The great and ancient text*, translations from Chinese by Tomassini Fausto, Edit. UTET, Torin 2003 Pg. 5-7).
- VI. Confucius’s disciple, Mencius says: “He who conforms himself to Heaven will survive, he who opposes Heaven will perish!” (Cf. THE FOUR BOOKS OF CONFUCIUS, *Meng-Tzu, [Mencius] IVth book*, 68, Op. pg. 352).
- VII. Jesus says: “I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world!” (Cf. Jn 6, 51.58): “I am the resurrection and the life (says the Lord); whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live!” (Jn 11,25), therefore “I am the light of the world. Walk while you have the light, so that darkness may not overcome you..” (Jn 8, 12) I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”(Jn 14,6)!