



Art and Truth

Art is a way of manifesting the truth: The Catechism recalls.

The beauty of the truth has inspired many artists because it was God who created beauty.

God, Jesus Christ, the truth, the Saints,... for the beauty they possess and reflect have been the source of inspiration for many artists in music, painting, architecture, sculpture, literature, poetry, photography, cinema, theatre,...

Art is a human value in itself, which is attracted by the complete truth of man, which reaches its transcendent and spiritual dimension. Religions have inspired artists. The art of all time is filled with Christian masterpieces, that is, inspired by the truth that Christ has revealed to us that it is added to the attractive natural truth with which God created us.

The Catechism, curiously speaks of art within the chapters dedicated to the truth, in particular chapter VI is called "Truth, Beauty and Sacred Art", from which we select some texts:

2500 The practice of good is accompanied by a free spiritual pleasure and moral beauty. In the same way, truth entails the joy and splendor of spiritual beauty. The truth is beautiful by itself. The truth of the word, rational expression of the knowledge of the created and uncreated reality, is necessary to the man endowed with intelligence, but the truth can also find other forms of human expression, especially when it comes to evoke what it is known as unspeakable, the depths of the human heart, the elevations of the soul, the Mystery of God. Before revealing himself to man in words of Truth, God reveals himself to him, through the universal language of creation, work of his Word, his Wisdom: the order and harmony of the cosmos, which perceive both the child and the man of science, "by the greatness and beauty of the creatures, one gets, by analogy, to contemplate their Author "(SB 13, 5)," because it was the same Author of the beauty who created them "(SB 13, 3).

2501 The man, "created in God's image" (Gn 1, 26), also expresses the truth of his

relationship with the Creator through the beauty of his artistic works. Art, indeed, is a form of human expression; above the satisfaction of vital necessities, common to all living creatures, art is a gratuitous overabundance of the inner richness of the human being. It springs from a talent bestowed by the Creator and the effort of man, and is a kind of practical wisdom, which unites knowledge and skill (cf Sb 7, 16-17) to shape the truth of a reality in accessible language to the eye and to the ear. Art thus implies a certain likeness to the activity of God in creation, to the extent that it is inspired by the truth and the love of the beings. Like any other human activity, art does not have a purpose itself, but is ordered and ennobled by the ultimate purpose of man.

2502 The Sacred art is true and beautiful when it corresponds by its form to its own vocation: to evoke and to glorify, in the faith and the worship, the transcendent mystery of God, over-eminent and invisible beauty of truth and of love, manifested in Christ... True sacred art leads man to worship, to prayer and to the love of God the Creator and Savior, Holy and Sanctifying.

2503 That is why the bishops must personally or by delegation monitor and promote the ancient and new sacred art in all its forms, and to set aside with the same religious attention of the liturgy and the buildings of worship anything that does not agree with the truth of the faith and the authentic beauty of the sacred art.

And in Chapter II, talking about the liturgy, sacred music is mentioned:
"The one who sings, prays twice" (St. Augustine).

Singing and music

In the Gospels of Matthew 26:30 and Mark 14:26 they say that Jesus with his disciples sang a hymn before he gave himself up to be crucified, by means of Judas. The Apostle Paul exhorts in Ephesians 5:19 the Church of Ephesus to sing songs, hymns, and spiritual songs to the Lord. In the Epistle to the Colossians 3:16 the same Paul urges the colossal church to teach and admonish each other, with hymns and spiritual chants.

1156 "The musical tradition of the Universal Church constitutes a treasure of inestimable value that stands out among other artistic expressions, mainly because the sacred song, together with the words, constitutes a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy." The composition and singing of inspired psalms, often accompanied by musical instruments, were already closely linked to the liturgical celebrations of the Ancient Alliance.

1157 Song and music fulfill their function of signs in a more meaningful way as "more closely linked to liturgical action", according to three main criteria: the expressive beauty of prayer, the unanimous participation of the assembly in the expected moments and the solemn character of the celebration.

1158 The harmony of the signs (song, music, words and actions) is more

expressive and fruitful the more it expresses itself in the cultural richness of the people of God that celebrates. Therefore, "Encourage with commitment the popular religious chant, so that in the pious and sacred exercises and in the same liturgical actions", according to the norms of the Church "resound the voices of the Faithful". But "texts destined for sacred chant should be in accordance with Catholic doctrine; even more, they must be taken mainly from Sacred Scripture and from liturgical sources."