

**This reflection is an extract from Episode 2 of 'An Astonishing Secret – The Love Story of Creation and the Wonder of You' video course, therefore please read as if being spoken.**

**Daniel's reflection for week beginning 24th January - Theology is a Love Story**

Theology is a Love-Story - To grow into this welcoming, most beautiful understanding requires much unlearning. This reflection encourages us to let go of very flawed and untrue teachings about an Original Sin, a God who punishes, who allows bad things to happen, who favours Christians. Our Popes have used the phrase 'One God, many religions, many theologies.' We can talk about this as 'One Love, many love-stories.' We must shift the basis of our faith from the misunderstood myth of a lost Paradise, to the truth of a Divine Lover's heart, aching and beating with a fierce love for us and for Creation. This reflection emphasises a living, loving, forgotten spirituality. It is good to remind ourselves that there are many theologies within the Catholic Church, for example Saint Bonaventure and Saint Thomas Aquinas, who lived around the same time, had different theologies. Also, Pope John the 23rd and Pope Paul VI both said the same thing, that faith is one but theologies are many.

Pope Francis is obviously working out of most beautiful theology of creation when he says:

*' God has written a precious book ...  
No creature is excluded ...  
Nature is a constant revelation of the divine ...  
The divine glory is everyone ...  
The sacred grandeur of God is in every human heart.'*

It reminds me of the beautiful passage from St Paul's letter to Corinthians (2 Corinthians 3:3)

*'You are God's love letters, written not with ink, but with the love called the Holy Spirit, written not on stone, but on the pages of your human heart.'*

This the real and traditional theology that makes our heart sing!

Let us look at two theologies that we are familiar with so that we can see the contrast. One is called a Theology of Sin/Redemption the other is called a Theology of Creation, of Nature and Grace. The beautiful theology of nature and grace is concerned with 'Original Blessing' rather than 'Original Sin'; with Original Joy rather than Original Guilt; with Original Divine Light rather than Original Darkness of Sin. You can sense what that difference in emphasis does! Here's how Franciscan theologian Richard Rohr puts it:

*'Christianity's contrived 'Fall/Redemption' spirituality just kept digging a deeper, impossible basis for the faith. We must return to our original 'Creation Theology and Spirituality' for the foundational reform of Christianity.'*

It looks like our faith will need to be redefined and that a theology of creation will need to be set free. It will warm our hearts, it will renew our minds and I think it will heal our bodies, so beautiful is it,

because we are created to hear that lovely story. I invite you now to reflect for a few moments on your own understanding and your image of God – is it a God spilling over with love or a judging God?

(An Astonishing Secret video course can be accessed at <https://astonishingsecret.org>  
A DVD set of the video course can be obtained from Pauline Books and Media  
<https://www.paulineuk.org/browse/dvds/item/astonishing-secret/5031446770610>)