

Christian Heritage Centre, Summer School 2023

Illustrated talk on Faith and the Arts

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References

**Address of Pope Paul VI to Artists, at the closing of the second Vatican Council
8 December 1965**

This world in which we live needs beauty in order not to sink into despair. It is beauty, like truth, which brings joy to the heart of man and is that precious fruit which resists the wear and tear of time, which unites generations and makes them share things in admiration. ...

***The Via Pulchritudinis (Path of Beauty)* Pontifical Council for Culture, plenary assembly 2006 concluding document**

‘The way of beauty replies to the intimate desire for happiness that resides in the heart of every person. Opening infinite horizons, it prompts the human person to push outside of himself, from the routine of the ephemeral passing instant, to the Transcendent and Mystery, and seek, as the final goal of the ultimate quest for wellbeing and total nostalgia, this original beauty which is God Himself, creator of all created beauty.’

‘The communicating capacity of sacred art renders it able to break down barriers, filter prejudices and reach the heart of people from different cultures and religions and let them perceive the universality of the message of Christ and His Gospel.’

**Catechism of the Catholic Church, Part 3: Life in Christ
8th Commandment: ‘Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour’**

‘...Truth in words, ... is necessary to man, who is endowed with intellect. But truth can also find other complementary forms of human expression, above all when it is a matter of evoking what is beyond words: the depths of the human heart, the exaltations of the soul, the mystery of God.’ (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 2500)

‘Sacred art is true and beautiful when its form corresponds to its particular vocation: evoking and glorifying, in faith and adoration, the transcendent mystery of God – the surpassing invisible beauty of truth and love visible in Christ,...’(*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 2502)

Beauty: the radiance or splendour of truth, goodness and unity

The beauty of an artwork depends on the extent of the truth, goodness and unity of:

- the content and composition
- the materials used (pigments, oils, fresco, stone)
- the artist's skill
- the artist's moral life

Sacred Art of the Catholic Faith will be:

- ❖ Trinitarian
- ❖ Christocentric
- ❖ Ecclesial
- ❖ Sacramental/Eucharistic
- ❖ Indicating Redemption (Paschal mystery)
- ❖ Scriptural (OT & NT)
- ❖ Marial
- ❖ Holistic