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Website: www.EasterSpirit.com

YouTube [English] <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmAveYvBLXlhPZs3uo3Sr4TQJOTHQ8lNN>

YouTube [Malti] https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmAveYvBLXliQYWF_jsENB4T3BGldweGh

YouTube EasterSpirit Channel for past videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/TonyImagine>

[ENGLISH] Series: ZF: Awakening

Being watchful is the key to the divine life.

FIRST SUNDAY¹ OF ADVENT

ZF1. Be Watchful – 2 ways

Watch! Watch! Jesus tells us how to live in the presence of God by being watchful. Jesus said

“Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come.... You do not know when the Lord of the house is coming. ... May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping.” [Mk 13:33-37]

God may come and take over our house, that is, our life, when it is God’s pleasure to do so. We may hope that this happens many years before we die. For God to find us ready when God visits, what kind of watchfulness must I have?

The Desert Fathers (from the 3rd Century onwards) understood at least two types of watchfulness. One type is when you notice all that is going on in your mind and heart. In this way you discover the tricks of consciousness that usually carry you away, sometimes even leading you to bad destinations. The more you are aware of these, the more able you will be to hold your ground, and not get carried away.

The second type of watchfulness is simply to watch! To be present – not lost in anxieties and forebodings, not drunk, not asleep. Not imagining, not even thinking, but fully awake. This kind of Christian contemplative openness, or Christian meditation, resting in God without words and thoughts, requires regular practice.

1 _

Jesus said to his disciples:

... “Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy
from carousing and drunkenness
and the anxieties of daily life, ...
Be vigilant at all times
and pray that you have the strength
to escape the tribulations that are imminent
and to stand before the Son of Man.”

Lk 21:25-28, 34-36

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Be watchful! Be alert!
You do not know when the time will come.
It is like a man traveling abroad.
He leaves home and places his servants in charge,
each with his own work,
and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch.
Watch, therefore;
you do not know when the Lord of the house is coming,
whether in the evening, or at midnight,
or at cockcrow, or in the morning.
May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping.
What I say to you, I say to all: ‘Watch!’”
[Mk 13:33-37]

The desert fathers tell us that these two types*² of watchfulness lead us to the Kingdom, both that part which is in us and also that which is still to be fulfilled.

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SECOND SUNDAY³ OF ADVENT

ZF2. Is My Life A Pilgrimage?

Is your life a pilgrimage, or perhaps you don't know what this question even means? If your life is a pilgrimage, then maybe you have already heard the messenger of God telling you, in your heart, like the prophet Isaiah, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths." [Mk 1:1-8] And maybe in that case you already understand what this means for your own life, to "prepare the way of the Lord and to make straight his paths".

And maybe then you will realise, with John the Baptist, that the Christ is ready to come into your heart. And that He will @Baptise you with the Holy Spirit."

And what does this mean, to be Baptised with the Holy Spirit? Are you being invited to join the Holy Trinity? The divine breath of God is already the hidden foundation of your life as a person. Are you being invited to be ready to welcome this breath of God that is inside you and is your true essence? The divine breath of God ready to take over your life as soon as you say "I accept"?

And if this is really what is happening, what a celebration, on earth and in heaven!

² - This 'kingdom within us' is characterized according to the Philokalia more particularly by two virtues: by νῆψις, a term denoting sobriety, temperance, lucidity, and above all vigilance and watchfulness; and by ἡσυχία, which signifies not so much exterior silence as inner stillness of heart. Key concepts. Source: <http://www.carmelapologetics.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Philokalia-in-English.pdf>

³ - Luke 3:1-6

... A voice of one crying out in the desert:
"Prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight his paths.
Every valley shall be filled
and every mountain and hill shall be made low.
The winding roads shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth,
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

Mk 1:1-8

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet:
Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you;
he will prepare your way.
A voice of one crying out in the desert:
"Prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight his paths."
John the Baptist ... proclaimed:
"One mightier than I is coming after me.
I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals.
I have baptized you with water;
he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

ZF3. Rejoice!

Watchfulness and love are what Jesus recommends as a way to permit God to take over. When the Christ, the creative spirit of God, takes over your life, or mine, there may be a struggle for a while until you or I are able to accommodate him properly in his role as Master of the house. But as time goes on, this process becomes one of joy. The Bible and Jesus himself attest to this in various parts of the New and Old Testaments.

St Paul in his letter to the Philippians in the New Testament gets into the spirit of this joyful celebration, saying

Brothers and sisters:
Rejoice in the Lord always.
I shall say it again: rejoice!

...

The Lord is near.
Have no anxiety at all, but in everything,
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,
make your requests known to God.
And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus

(Phil 4:4-7)

There will be not only joy, but a certain peace, a peace that takes over your life. What kind of peace is this? It is not a usual kind of peace. In fact we cannot even understand it with our ordinary mind, because it belongs to the divine world; it is the "peace of God". St Paul in his letter to Philippians calls it "the peace of God that surpasses all understanding."⁴ But we do feel it, and amazingly, we will then have the sense that it can never go away, whatever the troubles we have to pass through in life.

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⁴ - Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

ZF4. A Blessing Indeed

When you, or I, through watchfulness and love and openness to God, invite the Master of the house to take over, and when the Master accepts the invitation and comes up from the depths and heights of your spirit to take over all of your life, then that is your own personal Christmas, a celebration in earth and heaven. You will be happy to share it with others.

To you and all such persons will then apply the words of Mary's cousin Elisabeth when she greeted the pregnant Mary:

“Blessed are you who believed
that what was spoken to you by the Lord
would be fulfilled.” [Lk 1:39-45]

But this joyful and profoundly peaceful process will not be only *your own* personal Christmas, because each person that permits God to take over in this way is making humanity, the whole of humanity, through Christ, closer to God.

A blessing indeed!

[MALTI] Sensiela: ZF: Inqumu

Li nkunu mqajmin iwassalna lejn ħajja f'Alla

L-EWWEL HADD⁵ TAL-AVVENT 2015

ZF1. Għajn Miftuħa – 2 modi

Ishar! Oqgħod attent! Żomm għajnejk miftuħin! Ġesù qalilna kif ngħixu fil-Preżenza t'Alla billi nisgħru, noqgħdu attenti. Inkunu miġburin u nindunaw x'qed jiġri fina. Ġesù qal,

“Kunu għajnejkom miftuħa, ishru, għax ma tafux meta se jasal il-waqt. ... ma tafux meta jiġi Sid id-dar ... li ma jmurx jiġi għal għarrieda u jsibkom reqdin.” [Mk 13:33-37]

Alla jista' jiġi jieħu l-pussess ta' darna, jiġifieri ta' ħajjitna, fil-ħin u l-mument skond il-pjaċir tiegħu. Nisperaw li dan jiġri ħafna snin qabel ma mmutu. Meta jiġi Alla jieħu l-pussess ta' ħajti, għandi nkun lest u attent, halli jsibni mqajjem. X'tip ta' attenzjoni allura għandu jkollu?

Il-Missirijiet u l-Ommijiet tad-Deżert (fl-Egittu mis-seklu 3 l' quddiem) minn dan-tagħlim ta' Ġesù dwar l-attenzjoni meħtieġa, kienu jifhmu almenu żewġ tipi ta' attenzjoni li hemm bżonn. L-ewwel tip ta' attenzjoni huwa meta tkun qed tinduna b'kull ma jkun qed jiġri f'moħħok u f'qalbek. B'dan il-mod, tiskopri il-logħob li moħħok 'l-ħin kollu jilgħab – logħob li s-soltu jkaxkrekk, kultant anki lejn triqat mħumiex tajbin. Aktar ma tkun attent għalih dan il-logħob tal-moħħ, u tinduna bih, allura aktar tkun kapaċi ż-żomm sod u ma jkaxkrekk.

Skond il-Missirijiet tad-Deżert, it-tieni tip ta' attenzjoni, li Ġesù qalilna li tgħinna nkunu fil-Preżenza t'Alla, hija li sempliċement tishar, toqgħod attent, ma tkunx mitluf tewden, jew xurban jew rieqed. ...Bla ma tkun qed iġġib xejn quddiem għajnejk – saħansitra bla ma tkun qed taħseb – iżda tkun imqajjem, miġbur, moħħok hemm! Dan it-tip ta' ftuħ nistrani kontemplattiv, jew meditazzjoni nistranija, fejn wiehed jistrieħ f'Alla mingħajr kliem u mingħajr ħsibijiet, jehtieglu Prattika regolari sabiex tidrah.

Dawn iż-żewġ tipi⁶ ta' attenzjoni (l-ewwel li tinduna b'dak li qed ikaxkrekk, u t-tieni li tingabar fis-skiet anki tal-moħħ) iwassluna lejn ir-Renju – sew dik il-parti tar-Renju li qegħda fostna, u sew ukoll dik il-parti li għadha trid titwettagħ.

⁵ _

[25] "U jkun hemm sinjali fix-xemx u l-qamar u l-kwiekeb. Il-ġnus fuq l-art, b'qalbhom ittaqtaq, ma jafux x'jaqbd u jagħmlu minħabba l-ħsejjes tal-baħar u ta' l-imwieġ; [26] in-nies ruħhom ħierġa bil-biza' billi jobsru x'ikun ġej fuq id-dinja, għax il-qawwiet tas-smewwiet jitqallbu. [27] Mbagħad jaraw lil Bin il-bniedem ġej fi sħaba, b'qawwa u gloriya kbira. [28] Meta jibda jseħħ dan kollu, qawwu qalbkom u erfghu raskom, għax il-fidwa tagħkom hi fil-qrib. [Lk 21:25-28, 34-36]

[33] "Kunu għajnejkom miftuħa, ishru, għax ma tafux meta se jasal il-waqt. [34] Jiġri bħal meta bniedem ikun siefer u telaq mid-dar, iħalli kolloxx f'idejn il-qaddejja tiegħu, kull wiehed fuq xogħlu, u lil tal-bieb jordanu biex jibqa' jishar. [35] Mela ishru, għax ma tafux meta jiġi Sid id-dar, jekk hux fil-għaxija, jew f'nofs il-lejl, jew xhin jidden is-serduk, jew inkella mas-sebħ, [36] li ma jmurx jiġi għal għarrieda u jsibkom reqdin. [37] U dak li qiegħed ngħid lilkom, qiegħed ngħidu għal kulħadd: ishru!" [Mk 13:33-37]

⁶ - This 'kingdom within us' is characterized according to the Philokalia more particularly by two virtues: by νῆψις (nipsis) a term denoting sobriety, temperance, lucidity, and above all vigilance and watchfulness; and by

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IT-TIENI HADD⁷ TAL-AVVENT 2015

ZF2. Hajti pellegrinagg?

Hajti pellegrinagg? Jew forsi ma nafx x'tista' tfisser mistoqsija bhal din? Jekk hajtek hija pellegrinagg, forsi digà tkun smajt lil-messaġġier ta' Alla, f'qalbek, jgħidlek, bhal-profeta Izaia,

“Hejju t-triq tal-Mulej, iddritaw il-mogħdijiet tiegħu.”

U f'dak il-każ forsi tifhem dan x'ifisser għall-hajja tiegħek, li “twitti it-triq tal-Mulej, u tiddritta l-mogħdijiet tiegħu”.

U mbagħad forsi nindunaw, ma' Ġwanni l-Battista, li il-Kristu lest biex jiġi f'qalbna. U li “jgħammadna bl-Ispirtu s-Santu.”

ἡσυχία (isychía) which signifies not so much exterior silence as inner stillness of heart. Key concepts. Source: <http://www.carmelapologetics.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Philokalia-in-English.pdf>

⁷ - [Luqa 3:1-6]

[Lq:3:1] Fis-sena hmistax tal-ħakma ta' Tiberju Ċesari, meta Ponzju Pilatu kien gvernatur tal-Lhudija, Erodì tetrarka tal-Galilija, hùh Filippu tetrarka ta' l-artijiet ta' l-Iturija u t-Trakonija, u Lisanja tetrarka ta' Abileni, [2] fiż-żmien meta l-uffiċċju ta' qassis il-kbir kien f'idejn Anna u Kajfa, il-kelma tal-Mulej giet fuq Ġwanni bin Żakkarija, fid-deżert. [3] U gie fl-inħawi kollha ta' madwar il-Ġordan, ixandar magħmudija ta' ndiema għall-maħfra tad-dnubiet, [4] kif hemm imniżżel fil-ktieb tal-profeziji ta' Isaija:

'Lehen ta' wiehed jgħajjat fid-deżert:
Hejju t-triq tal-Mulej,
iddritaw il-mogħdijiet tiegħu.
[5] Kull wied jimtela,
kull muntanja u għolja titbaxxa,
il-mogħdijiet mgħawwġa jiddritaw,
u t-triqat imħarbta jitwittew.
[6] U l-bnedmin kollha jaraw is-salvazzjoni ta' Alla.'

[Mk 1:1-8]

[1] Il-Bidu ta' l-Evangelju ta' Ġesù Kristu l-Iben ta' Alla. [2] Bħalma hu miktub fil-ktieb ta' Isaija l-profeta,

'Ara, jien nibgħat qablek il-ħab bār
tiegħi biex ihejji triqtek.
[3] Lehen ta' wiehed jgħajjat fid-deżert:
Hejju t-triq tal-Mulej,
iddritaw il-mogħdijiet tiegħi,'

[4] hekk Ġwanni deher jgħammed fid-deżert u jxandar magħmudija ta' ndiema għall-maħfra tad-dnubiet. [5] U kienet tmur għandu l-Lhudija kollha u n-nies kollha ta' Ġerusalem, jitgħammadu minnu fix-xmara Ġordan waqt li jistqarru dnubietom.

[6] Ġwanni kien jilbes libsa tax-xagħar tal-gemel, bi ħziem tal-gild madwar qaddu, u kien jiekol gradijiet u għasel selvaġġ. [7] U kien ixandar u jgħid: "Ġej warajja min hu aqwa minni, li jien ma jisthoqqlix nitbaxxa quddiemu u nħoll il-qfieli tal-qorq tiegħu. [8] Jiena għammadtkom bl-ilma, iżda huwa jgħammadtkom bl-Ispirtu s-Santu."

U x'ifisser, dan, li wiehed jitghammed bl-Ispirtu s-Santu? Qed tiġi mistieden li tkun sieheb mal-Imqaddsa Trinità? In-Nifs t'Alla diġà huwa l-pedament moħbi tal-ħajja tiegħek bħala persuna. Jaqaw qed tiġi mistieden biex tagħti merħba lil dan in-nifs t'Alla li huwa l-essenza tiegħek? In-Nifs divin ta' Alla huwa lest biex isir il-mexxej ta' ħajtek, jew ħajti, malli ngħidu "Ikun minni skond kel mtek" ?

U jekk huwa tassew *dan* li jkun qed jiġri, x'festa tkun dik, fl-art u fis-sema!

IT-TIELET HADD TAL-AVVENT 2015.

ZF3. Ifraħ!

Bhala mezz biex nistiednu lil Alla jieħu l-pussess ta' hajjitna, Ġesù jagħmlilna żewġ rikmandazzjonijiet: li nishar, u li nħobb. Meta il-Kristu, l-Ispirtu Kreattiv ta' Alla, jieħu l-pussess u jsir il-mexxej tal hajja tiegħi, jew tiegħek, għall-bidu għandu mnejn ikun hemm għieda jew taqbid, għal ċertu żmien, waqt li int jew jien insiru kapaċi nilqgħuh kif imiss fil-pożizzjoni għdida tiegħu bhala Sid id-Dar. Izda, wara ċertu żmien, din il-bidla issir waħda ta' ferħ. Il-Bibbja u Ġesù innifsu jixhdu dan f'diversi partijiet tat-Testment il-Qadim u l-Ġdid.

San Pawl fl-ittra tiegħu lill-Filippin fit-Testment il-Ġdid, jidhol fl-ispirtu ta' din iċ-ċelebrazzjoni, din il-festa, hu u jgħid hekk,

[1] Għalhekk, intom, ħuti ... [4] Ifirħu dejjem fil-Mulej; nerga' ngħidilkom, *ifirħu*.

[5] Il-ħlewwa tagħkom, ha jkunu jafuha l-bnedmin kollha. Il-Mulej qorob. [6] Thabbtu raskom b'xejn. Fit-talb kollu tagħkom itolbu u uru lil Alla xi jkollkom bżonn, u iżżuh ħajr. [7] U s-sliem ta' Alla, sliem li jgħaddi kull ma l-moħħ jista' jifhem, iżommilkom qalbkom u moħħkom shaħ fi Kristu Ġesù. [Fil:4:4-7]

Jiġi mhux biss il-ferħ u l-hena, iżda wkoll ċertu sliem, li jimlilek hajtek. X'tip ta' sliem jew paċi huwa dan? Mhijiex paċi bħal tas-soltu. Infatti lanqas biss nifmuha bil-moħħ tas-soltu tagħna, għaliex hija paċi tad-dinja divina – fl-Iskrittura tissejjah “is-sliem t'Alla”. San Pawl fl-ittra tiegħu lill-Filippin anzi jsejhlha, “*sliem li jgħaddi kull ma l-moħħ jista' jifhem*”. Imma anki jekk ma nifmuhiex din il-paċi speċjali, inħossuha u, haġa tal-għaġeb, insiru konvinti illi, jiġi kemm jiġi għawg li jkollna ngħaddu minnu f'hajjitna, din il-paċi qatt ma tista' tisparixxi.

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IR-RABA' HADD TAL-AVVENT 2015

ZF4. Barka tassew

Permezz ta' l-attenzjoni (li tishar, kif qal Ġesù) u permezz tal-imħabba,-3 u permezz tal-ftuh lejn Alla, tista' tistieden lil Sid id-Dar biex jiġi jieh u l-pożizzjoni tiegħu bħala l-mexxej ta' hajtek. Meta is-Sid ikollu pjaċir jaċċetta l-istedina u jiġi mill-fond u mill-ġholi sabiex jieh u l-pussess, dak ikun il-Milied personali tiegħek, festa kbira fl-art u fis-smewwiet. Tkun l-ghaxxa tiegħek li tferrah lil oħrajn biha.

Għalik, u għal kull min ikun għadda minn din il-bidla, tapplika it-tislima ta' Elisabbetta lil kuġintha Marija, li kienet tqila b'Ġesù:

Iva, hienja dik li emmnet li jseh kull ma bagħat jghidilha l-Mulej!" [Lk 1:39-45]

Izda dan il-proċess hieni, u mimli sliem fil-fond, ma jkunx il-Milied personali tiegħek biss. Infatti, kull persuna li tistieden u thalli lil Alla tiehu l-pussess ta' hajjitha b'dan il-mod, tkun qed tagħmel ġid lil-umanità kollha. Persuna bħal din tkun qed tqarreb lil-ġens tal-bniedem kollu, b'mod li ma jidhirx, iġġibu eqreb u eqreb lejn Alla permezz ta' Kristu. Tkun qed twettaq ir-Renju.

Barka, barka tassew!
