

SO, WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR WORLD?

“They will have no fear of bad news; their hearts are steadfast,
trusting in the Lord” (Psalm 112:7)

Whenever I visit my doctor, he leans back in his chair, places his hands behind his head and looks at me. His first words are always – ‘So what’s happening?’ I take a deep breath and begin to verbalize my immediate health issues. For a few moments, he sits quietly reflecting on what I have just told him. He will then ask me a few questions, refer to my computerized medical history, check a few details and finally, if necessary, write me a script which will hopefully solve my current health issues.

I guess the point I am trying to clarify in my mind is that if I have medical problems, it makes sense to pay my doctor a visit. My doctor is a lovely man, hugely popular, in fact so popular, one almost feels the need to make an appointment before the need to pay him a visit occurs! After my consultation with him, I thank him and say – ‘See you next time!’ I leave the surgery feeling relieved, listened to and more confident. So, what’s the point of my writing this? Without delving too deeply at the moment, I am just sitting here with the question - what’s happening in our world?

The situation for myself as I have just described it is a simple one. It concerns only my minor health problems and I have no difficulties in getting them resolved. But it is not health problems which are on my mind. The problems with which I am more concerned over are of a much deeper nature. They are so enormous that they warrant the media publishing them on an hourly/ daily basis with the most eye-catching and frightening headlines possible. From a negative perspective, we could well be facing the dire prospect of a world breakdown – economically, socially, morally and environmentally. Dire predictions are never popular but they are not always wrong!

As we are all only too aware, the past two years have been particularly packed with bad news making it appear as if our world is falling apart. As if God is more absent than present. Our whole world is labouring under the devastation of the recent calamities with which we have had to cope. We have experienced global crises, from the Covid 19 pandemic to climate change, political upheaval, failing economies, massive flooding, poverty and now the terror of war. With easy access to information, especially through social media, we are constantly coping with the onslaught of all kinds of negative news – literally every second. And with one, universal voice, or we should be, we are crying out – ‘what is happening to our world – and why?’

It seems our present way of life is rapidly becoming unsustainable and it must change. I believe that until we are prepared to change direction by asking some soul-searching questions, we could be heading towards a future that appears far more uncertain than it is already. There’s an old Chinese proverb which warns: ‘If we do not change direction, we are likely to end up exactly where we are headed!’ This would be disastrous worldwide!

A new and happier future, however, is unlikely to happen in the near or distant future if all we do is remain apathetic, negative and indifferent, waiting for a converging holism of new cultures and new sciences to do the groundwork for us.

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What’s Happening...

Working towards and dreaming of a better worldwide future is possible when groups of witnesses, conscious of both their smallness and the magnitude of the powers stacked against them, nevertheless persist in hope. We need to communicate the saving hope that is our faith in Jesus by constantly renewing our own.

Several years ago, I came across a beautiful little prayer by St. Bridget of Sweden, co-patroness of Europe and I have been praying it daily ever since. She is praying to God for peace in our world. It is the final words of the prayer which really touch me - "I come to You as the wounded go to the doctor in search of aid. Give peace, Oh Lord, to my heart. Amen".

No need to make appointments with this 'Doctor' – he's 'on call' constantly!

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