

Free zone.

The contribution of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin for a refoundation of theology

by Marcelo Bravo Pereira

As a contribution to the proposed "epistemological refoundation of theology," it would be helpful to dust off some reflections made by those who, before the Council, sought paths of renewal, entering into complex but fruitful issues. Among them was Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. In **The evolutionary Christ** (1942), which appeared in the book **My faith** (Queriniana, Brescia, 1993), he proposed some ideas that can still be relevant today. We do not ignore the limits and paradoxes of his thought, but we do recognize that he was able to combine authentic faith and openness to the world.

Teilhard de Chardin had already foresaw the change of epoch announced by Pope Francis. In "The phenomenon of man" he described it as the definitive overcoming of the Neolithic period. The 20th century had awakened with a broader understanding of the universe and of man. Evolutionism, quantum mechanics, and the theory of relativity changed our view of reality.

Today, emerging issues include transhumanism and the gender theory. Teilhard de Chardin, along the lines of science, recognized the need to "readjust the main features of Christology to a renewed universe."

(...)

In the past, theology focused primarily on the reparatory dimension. This does not mean, however, that from the very beginning there was not another element, a positive one, concerning "reconstruction or recreation". The fruit of creation is not only redemption, but also the new heavens and the new earth. Christ comes to us, undoubtedly to purify, but also to revitalize. In fact, what is primary and essential is "to bring creation to completion in union with God"; the consequence is purification, that is, "to eliminate the evil forces of backwardness and dispersion.

Teilhard de Chardin is convinced that the Church, despite being divine and immortal, needs to rejuvenate itself periodically. The theological criterion he proposed can come to our aid. The temptation to shut oneself up in self-referentiality can be overcome by considering this new humanism, where "human progress and the kingdom of God are not opposed". Progress, of course, seen as the development of those positive energies of matter that make up the fundamental part of creation that belongs to Christ from its origin.

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