



Tau Maria Franciscan Formation Meditations
BENEDICT XVI GENERAL AUDIENCE
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M Meditation – Franciscan Theology and the Incarnation

He says in his "*Reportatio Parisiensis*": "To think that God would have given up such a task had Adam not sinned would be quite unreasonable! I say, therefore, that the fall was not the cause of Christ's predestination and that if no one had fallen, neither the angel nor man in this hypothesis Christ would still have been predestined in the same way" (in *III Sent.*, d. 7, 4). This perhaps somewhat surprising thought crystallized because, in the opinion of Duns Scotus the Incarnation of the Son of God, planned from all eternity by God the Father at the level of love is the fulfilment of creation and enables every creature, in Christ and through Christ, to be filled with grace and to praise and glorify God in eternity. Although Duns Scotus was aware that in fact, because of original sin, Christ redeemed us with his Passion, Death and Resurrection, he reaffirmed that the Incarnation is the greatest and most beautiful work of the entire history of salvation, that it is not conditioned by any contingent fact but is God's original idea of ultimately uniting with himself the whole of creation, in the Person and Flesh of the Son.

As a faithful disciple of St Francis, Duns Scotus liked to contemplate and preach the Mystery of the saving Passion of Christ, as the expression of the loving will, of the immense love of God who reaches out with the greatest generosity, irradiating his goodness and love (cf. *Tractatus de primo principio*, c. 4). Moreover this love was not only revealed on Calvary but also in the Most Blessed Eucharist, for which Duns Scotus had a very deep devotion and which he saw as the Sacrament of the Real Presence of Jesus and as the Sacrament of unity and communion that induces us to love each other and to love God, as the Supreme Good we have in common (cf. *Reportatio Parisiensis*, in *IV Sent.*, d. 8, q. 1, n. 3). As I wrote in my [Letter for the International Congress in Cologne marking the seventh centenary of the death of Blessed Duns Scotus](#), citing the thought of our author: "just as this love, this charity, was at the origin of all things, so too our eternal happiness will be in love and charity alone: 'willing, or the loving will, is simply eternal life, blessed and perfect'" (AAS 101 [2009], 5).

Dear brothers and sisters, this strongly "Christocentric" theological vision opens us to contemplation, wonder and gratitude: Christ is the centre of history and of the cosmos, it is he who gives meaning, dignity and value to our lives! As Pope Paul vi proclaimed in Manila, I too would like to cry out to the world: [Christ] "reveals the invisible God, he is the firstborn of all creation, the foundation of everything created. He is the Teacher of mankind, and its Redeemer. He was born, he died and he rose again for us. He is the centre of history and of the world; he is the one who knows us and who loves us; he is the companion and the friend of our life.... I could never finish speaking about him" ([Homily, Mass at Quezon Circle, Manila](#); 29 November 1970)....