Beauty, Cosmos, Liturgy and Culture

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The Way of Beauty

The Way of Beauty is a service mark and trade mark wholly owned by David Clayton
- In 1999, Pope John Paul II wrote a letter to artists in which he called for a ‘new epiphany of beauty’.
- Beauty directs our souls to the Creator
- We must be first reunited with the traditions from which we come, if we are to produce the art of Church as it is today, that is nevertheless as glorious as that of the past.
How does Christian art fulfil its purpose?

- It is good.
- It reflects truth.
- It is beautiful.
- These reside in the work of art (not in the eye of the beholder).
- ‘I like it’ is not the same as ‘it is good’.
- It is like food – we decide first if it is good, and then we select what we like.
Most of the time....
The transcendental:

- Unity - the oneness of being
- Good - the desirability of being
- True - the knowability of being
- Beautiful - the radiance of being
Beauty

- Integrity - the radiance of unity
- Due proportion - the radiance of goodness
- Claritas - the radiance of truth
Beauty - Order - Harmony

- Classical world - beauty is a reflection of harmony and order. There is a consensus that the cosmos is beautiful.
- Music, mathematics, the rhythms of nature – the cosmos
Harmony – Order - Love

- For the Church Fathers, the ordering principle of creation is love – harmonious relationships
- All point to the heavenly order and the heavenly liturgy.
- Highlighted by Pope Benedict XVI
Harmonious proportion

From music:

- 1:2 – octave
- 2:3 – perfect fifth
- 3:4 – perfect fourth

Octave in music, octave in liturgy
• Interval - 2 notes, chord - 3 notes
• Ratio - two magnitudes
• Proportion - two ratios, 3 or more magnitudes
Harmony in variety – Heaven is the invisible standard
‘The Enlightenment pushed faith into a kind of intellectual and even social ghetto. Contemporary culture turned away from the faith and trod another path, so that faith took flight in historicism, the copying of the past, or else attempted compromise or lost itself in resignation and cultural abstinence.’

Pope Benedict XVI, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*
Lex credendi, lex orandi

- Culture reflects and influences our core values, priorities and beliefs. Cultural reform starts with liturgical reform. The current cultural reform began about 200 years ago.

- Education is important too.

- Those who are cultured must CREATE new forms that speak to the uneducated today.

- This will be a popular culture of beauty.
Worship: Mass and Liturgy of the Hours; Observing the seasons, fasts and feasts!

Study of Scripture (Lectio Divina)

Study of the Old Masters (Geometry, Icon Painting, Academic Drawing)

Observation and drawing of nature (Cosmology)

The Quadrivium (Geometry, Harmony, Cosmology, Arithmetic)
Traditional Education

The traditional liberal arts are divided up into two sets:

- The trivium, ‘the three ways’ - Logic, rhetoric, grammar
- The quadrivium, the ‘four ways’ – an education in beauty and harmony: Geometry, number, harmony, cosmology
The result: a transformation of the person

- The development of intuition
- Increased creativity – more ideas and better ideas
- An increase in our ability and capacity to love God and man and.....

Joy