

Amaququ: Insinqizi: Voices of Southern Africa



Father Stan Chu Ilo speaks of his native continent with great affection. “If you ask me about the true picture of Africa, I would say it is a multiplicity of human experience held together by a common African spirituality based in the connections between people.”

This week we are invited to look closely at how an insight into another spirituality can enrich our own.

Prayer Leader:

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I experience life through my
encounter with other humans and
cosmic realities.

Father Stan Chu Ilo



Our prayer is characterized by silence ~

Be still and know that I am God!

In that silence we listen for a new word.

God is present in all our lives.

God cares for us, and

our life experiences are a source
of deepening knowledge of God and self.

Inspired by God's Word in the silence
we share from our hearts.

Renew · Refresh · Refocus

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To Ponder: Father Stan Chu Ilo

“God is in the ties that bind all of creation together, “
U.S. Catholic

African spirituality...

Someone has called it the moral tradition of abundant life. What is abundant life? I say it is human and cosmic flourishing, when every reality is intimately connected to every other reality in a harmonious bond. African thinking believes that war, hatred, alienation, injustice, and segregation are all evils that not only diminish both the perpetrators and the victims, but also God.

René Descartes, the French philosopher, said, “Cogito, ergo sum,” or “I think, therefore I am.” But many scholars in African philosophy and theology say it would be more appropriate to say, “I belong to the community, therefore I am. I am loved, therefore I am. I am related to you, therefore we are.”

In Bantu thinking, this is called the “vital principle”; I experience life through my encounter with other humans and cosmic realities. The more I am in harmony with creation, the richer I become and the more life is generated in me. Even stones have a vital principle because they are connected to the whole bondedness of life. Many in Africa refer to this as Ubuntu, “I am, through you” or “we are, through others.” I cannot have any meaning outside of the loving embrace of the we. And the we has no meaning if the multiplicity of individuals within that framework are not intimately connected, sharing life, experiences, pain, and suffering.

Reading Ed Hays, Canticale of Creation

In the beginning, Lord God,
You alone existed: eternally one
yet pregnant in the fullness of unity.

Full to overflowing,
You, Father of All Life, exploded outward
in a billion bits and pieces.

Your Words became flesh,
whirling in shining stars, shimmering suns
and in genesis glimmering galaxies.

You, my God, spoke,
and Your Words became flesh:
in sun and moon, earth and seas,
mountains and gentle hills,
rolling rivers and silent streams.

You, my God, spoke,
and Your Words became flesh:
in winged bird, in deer and elephant,
in grazing cow, racing horse and fish of the deep.

Your Words, so unique and so varied,
filled the earth also with rabbit, squirrel and ant.
And all Your Words were beautiful,
and all were good.

O Sacred Spirit, O Divine Breath of Life,
unseal my ears that they may ever listen
to Your continuous canticle of creation;
open my heart and my whole self,
to sing in harmony with all its many voices.

Sharing...

a word...

a phrase...

a reflection...