



FIAT – Newsletter nr. 76 – January 2022

Why are you a Catholic?

Reflections by and about L.J. Cardinal Suenens

Christians are of all kinds. In addition to Catholicism, there are also 3 other Christian denominations: Protestantism, Orthodoxy and Anglicanism. The London magazine *The Tablet* once interviewed a number of representatives of these Christian traditions to testify why they chose their particular confession. Cardinal Suenens also likes to answer the question of why he is Catholic. He starts with Montaigne's response to the question of why he loved his friend Etienne de La Boétie: "Because it's him and because it's me." Cardinal Suenens loves the Catholic Church because it is his mother, because it is her and because it is him. But of course that's not the whole story.



"Even today, Jesus is being born from Mary and the Holy Spirit."

+ L.J. Cardinal Suenens

Baptism

In his answer, Cardinal Suenens first and foremost wanted to express his love for the sacrament of Baptism. He expresses his gratitude to his parents for allowing him to be baptized. "This allowed me to understand how God's love from the beginning of my life protected and surrounded me." As a child, the Catholic Church also gradually allowed him to discover Jesus from the Gospel and through the people around him. And he also learned to understand better the secret of Mary, "who has no other reason to exist than to lead us to Christ." Finally, he was also allowed to gradually discover and experience the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Church, hence later his episcopal slogan: *'In Spiritu Sancto.'*

The temporary vs. the eternal

Even as a four-year-old, the death of his father Jean-Baptiste made Cardinal Suenens realize that only eternity counts. In his childhood, he spent hours on the garden wall coming up with sermons with which he could convert the whole world in his mind. That was the very beginning of his priestly vocation.

A unity in multiplicity

Cardinal Suenens calls the Catholic Church 'a unity in multiplicity': fundamentally and essentially a unity, yet in many ways open to diversity. He loves his Church and professes it "as 'one' with the whole radiance of God's love for this world."

The Holy Church

He learned early on to understand that "the holy Church" from our creed is not merely a Church of human saints, but that it is above all about "the sanctifying Spirit who overwhelms us with his grace and the sacraments." However, the cardinal experienced the holiness of a number of people up close. And that observable holiness of the Church, according to him, is situated not only on earth but also in communion with the saints in heaven. It is therefore an important dimension of his spiritual life to meet them in joyful anticipation in heaven.

From the Eucharist

Finally, Cardinal Suenens points to the importance of the Eucharist, "which brings about the communion between the bishops." This apostolic, global, borderless, and true, Eucharistic communion is, not surprisingly, summed up at the end of our creed.

Imagery of the sun

Cardinal Suenens concludes his answer in imagery: "To believe in the existence of the sun, it is not necessary to make a journey around the world to experience its light and warmth. It is sufficient to catch the sun's rays where one lives. Once a ray of sunshine on my face, I am obliged to believe in the existence of the sun. It is not necessary to know the effects of the sun in other climates and meridians. I believe in God's sun, that of the triune God and Father of Jesus Christ. It is that 'sun' that has always shone for me in the sky of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church.

I keep looking forward to the day when the unity will become visible in fullness. In the meantime, I know that ecumenism is being worked on in many ways. When the sea is covered with ice, there is a need for the inevitable work of the theologians - icebreakers - in search of the life-giving water that is sometimes separated by 'thick layers' of formulations. But for Christians, there is also the opportunity to pray together to the Holy Spirit: to melt the ice in us under the warmth of the Spirit's presence. We must all be "Christianized" by Jesus Christ. We must allow ourselves to be "sanctified by the Holy Spirit for the glory of the Father." We still have a long way to go, but here too we have to dare to believe in the sun, even if it is night or foggy. For myself, I believe in the dawn and it begins in the depths of the night."

The FIAT Newsletter is published three times a year
in French, Dutch, Spanish and English.

Course: L.J. Cardinal Suenens,
The Christian at the Dawn of a New Era pp. 19-25.

Responsible editor: Roger Matthys, FIAT Association asbl - Copyright © 2020 – All rights reserved.
P/A Diocesaan Pastoraal Centrum, Frederik de Merodestraat 18 - 2800 Mechelen
(Belgium)

Your name and email address have been included in a file by the FIAT Association so that we can keep you informed of our activities and initiatives. In accordance with the Belgian and European regulations on privacy, you have the right to inspect, adapt and delete the data stored by us.

For more information, please refer to our privacy statement on our website: <https://associationfiat.com>.

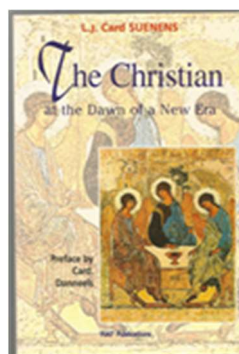
Do you wish to unsubscribe from our Newsletter? Please contact us by mail or phone :
association.fiat@telenet.be or +32 (0) 15 298 466

*"Whatever the gift that you're willing to
present to God, do not forget to
entrust it to Mary,
because grace goes back to the donor through
the same channel that brought it. "*

(St Bernard, 12th century)

We are very often invited to offer reductions
on costs for sending rosaries and various
evangelization tools to economically weak
countries. We are grateful for financial
support.

Bank Information: IBAN : BE15 0011 7774



7,00 EUR/pc + mailing cost

Association FIAT
F. de Merodestraat, 18
2800 MECHELEN
Belgium

association.fiat@telenet.be
+32 (0) 15 298 466