

Epistle to the Romans says, the entire creation that "groans" for ultimate fulfillment (Rom 8:22). After Darwin, that is to say, we can once again understand, as St. Paul did, that cosmic destiny and human destiny belong inseparably together.²

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

In the life which wells up in me and in the matter which sustains me, I find much more than Your gifts. It is You Yourself whom I find, You who make me participate in Your being, You who mould me. It is through the initial control and modulation of the vital force within me, and the favorable and continuous interplay of secondary causes, that I touch, as closely as may be, the two facets of Your creative action; that I encounter, and kiss, Your two marvelous hands—the one which holds us so firmly that it is merged, in us, with the sources of life; and the other whose embrace is so wide that, at its slightest pressure, all the springs of the universe respond harmoniously together. By their very nature, these blessed passivities which are, for me, the will to be, the wish to be thus and thus, and the opportunity to realize myself according to my desire, are all charged with Your influence—an influence which will shortly appear more distinctly to me as the organizing energy of the mystical Body. In order to communicate with You in them in a frontal communion (a communion with the source of Life), I have only to recognize You in them, and to ask You to be ever more present in them.

The life of each one of us is, as it were, woven of those two threads: the thread of inward development, through which our ideas and affections and our human and mystical attitudes are gradually formed; and the thread of outward success by which we always find ourselves at the exact point at which the totality of the forces of the universe converge to produce upon us the effect which God desires.

After having perceived You as: He who is 'a greater myself,' grant, when my hour comes, that I may recognize you under the species of such alien or hostile force that seems bent upon destroying or supplanting me. When the signs of age begin to mark my body (and still more when they touch my mind); when the ill that is to diminish me or carry me off strikes from without or is born within me; when the painful moment comes in which I suddenly awaken to the fact that I am ill or growing old; and above all at that last moment when I feel I am losing hold of myself and am absolutely passive within the hands of the great unknown forces that have formed me; in all those dark moments, O God, grant that I may understand that it is You (provided only my faith is strong enough) who are painfully parting the fibers of my being in order to penetrate to the very marrow of my substance and bear me away within Yourself."³

² David Toolan, *At Home in the Cosmos* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2001), 146-47.

³ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), 50, 51, 62.