

Novena for Paolo Fifth Day

Surat Ash-Sharh
(The Relief)

أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ ۝
وَوَضَعْنَا عَنكَ وِزْرَكَ ۝
الَّذِي أَنْقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ ۝
وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ ۝
فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ۝
إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ۝
فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ ۝
وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَأَرْغَبْ ۝

Did We not expand for you, [O Muhammad], your breast?
And We removed from you your burden
Which had weighed upon your back
And raised high for you your repute.
For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease.
Indeed, with hardship [will be] ease.
So when you have finished [your duties], then stand up [for worship].
And to your Lord direct [your] longing.

Translation: Sahih International

Words from Paolo

Sometimes, I do not feel any more the existence of God. In my prayer, in my life, I feel no more touch – nothing. The sky seems empty to me, everything is immobilised at my little level. It is in these moments that I make a little game. I am saying to myself: “Today, Paolo, you are ‘God’ – the only conscious being in the world. Decide in which direction you want to push it! Do you want to bring the world towards love and goodness or do you prefer to let it slide towards generalised egoism?”

Be in the world like you wish God to be! And perhaps you will find God as you desire Him. Perhaps you will understand that it was already Him who desired you, inside you.

Reported by Guyonne de Montjou, Mar Moussa, Paris 2006

From the Epistles of Saint Paul

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.

Rm 8:22-27