

faith, hope and love

They are three, the divine virtues.

Once, they were enshrined in acts that people had to learn by heart: the acts of faith, hope and love. Fundamental truths distilled into a prayer. There was also an act of desire. Less well known. More difficult to find. But perhaps it is precisely that desire which ensures the necessary dynamism in those fundamental truths.

This summer in the Magdalen Church we will depict the three divine virtues.

Each one is an encouragement to experience new things, discuss ideas, exchange thoughts.

We have drawn our inspiration from the books of Tomáš Halík, where he writes:

"I am convinced that the Christendom of tomorrow will be neither an ideology nor a 'system of beliefs and rituals'. Instead, it must and shall be a place of learning for faith, hope and love."

We wish you a pleasant visit to this place of learning for faith, hope and love.

FAITH as a continuous process of BACKWARDS and FORWARDS

Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." Matthew 17:20

The original Greek text says literally: 'Nothing will be without energy or power ['dynamis'] for you. Faith is not a matter of meekly and naively waiting; faith is something dynamic, something vital and living. The entire Christian tradition is permeated with dynamis, with a creative energy that allows us to make choices that will lead to a good life for everyone.

For this reason, faith is not a certainty, but is also constantly in motion, moving backwards and forwards like the arc of a swing. Back and forth, time after time. Knowing and not knowing.

A winding path of broken eggshells, on which we are required to carefully make our way forwards. But not in a straight line. Faith, hope and love do not move in straight lines!

A shining path that leads to the essence of things, a metaphor for the story that is told here in this place. Searching and testing, from the seed to the core.

Are traditions not like eggshells, in which we first grow but from which we must later break out?

It cannot be intended that we should remain sitting alone in our egg our whole life long.

Sooner or later, every swallow leaves its nest...

from 'What if' by Bieke Vandekerckhove



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WE HAVE THIS HOPE AS AN ANCHOR FOR THE SOUL, FIRM AND SECURE

Hebrews 6:19

I WANT YOU TO BE

In the nave of the church you will find a video installation by Brody Neuenschwander.

He writes in many different languages the words that St. Augustine used to describe love: "I want you to be".

Halík sees three dimensions in this statement:

I want You – God – to be; I want you – my neighbour – to be; I want – me – to be.

The courage to accept that you are accepted - Paul Tillich

Although 'faith, hope and love' are known as the divine virtues, no single religion can rightly claim them as its own. The essence of these virtues is that they automatically connect us with someone or something other than ourselves. For 'love', this seems self-evident, but 'hope' also prompts us to break out of our own shell: the hope of finding new solutions to the challenges that await us also involves a degree of reference to other people.

[Whereas optimism is not always realistic, hope must be based on reality, even if that reality is dark and sombre.]

The virtue of faith is often confused with religious belief. At its core, it is about having trust in life and in the people who mean something to us.

Paraphrased from: 'Fullness of Life and Justice for All' (2020, E. Van Stichel, M. Kalsky, e.a.). Madeleine Fredell OP (Sweden), values as a foundation for society.

Hope means having the courage to explore the 'territory of the impossible'.

One example of this is the promises that people make to each other.

You take an advance on your future, whereby you "do something that is truly beyond our power, because the future radically transcends our 'force field', the things on which we are capable of exercising influence.

This is why God and the future are inextricably linked."

Tomáš Halík

Gravel and lines of sand, with here and there something green in between, and some laurel.

The evergreen plant and symbol of hope. It grows slowly, but it never dies...

• Listen to the song by Jacques Brel: *Quand on a que l'amour*

*Alors sans avoir rien
Que la force d'aimer
Nous aurons dans nos mains
Amis le monde entier*

*So, having nothing
But the strength of love,
We will have in our hands,
My friend, the whole world.*

• Or ring the bell of hope.

*If the hope in you has triumphed over despair,
ring the bell (in the choir) as a statement
to the other people in the church.
As a wake-up call, as the start of a
new future, as...*

• Is love unconditional?

*View the film in the separate room
next to the feather room.*

• Note the line that runs between the installation in the nave, the swing of dynamism and the vulnerability of life.

• Enjoy a cup of coffee in Magda's coffee bar.