

Tuesday Reflection 7th July 2020

RECONCILIATION

Last Tuesday we were visiting the Garden of Eden and considering how the 'Fall' resulted in an alienation of (wo)man not only from God, but also from the rest of Creation - a legacy from which the Earth is still suffering.

What I think we saw happening in Eden was the emergence of the EGO, when Adam and Eve became aware of their own bodies and of themselves as individuals.

What we have seen over the centuries, and particularly nowadays, is a growing cult of the individual at the expense of the community and society in general. This shows itself in different ways, and is summed up in Margaret Thatcher's famous dictum that 'there is no such thing as society'. The cult of individualism manifests itself for example in the emphasis on 'rights' over 'responsibilities' and in a preoccupation with the externals of identity - not that there is anything intrinsically wrong in being concerned with our identity, but the thing about external identity is that it emphasises what is different about us, what separates us from others. Now diversity is not anything bad - on the contrary, as we saw a couple of weeks ago - but it needs to be seen as an element in commonality, an awareness of what it is to be part of a whole.

The answer to alienation is reconciliation - a 'bringing back together'. We are taught that what Jesus brought about on the Cross was a reconciliation of 'God and sinners', as we sing every Christmas. This work of reconciliation is, however, work in progress; God has done His bit, but we have to do ours. We need to strive for reconciliation not only with God, but also with the whole of His Creation - including the human part! We have been promised salvation - but salvation is not a personal, individual thing, but a communal event, summed up in the idea that 'None is saved until all are saved'.

If anything good is to come out of the Corvid pandemic, let it be an increased awareness of the interdependence of the whole of God's Creation, and let our prayer for today be that we work towards reconciliation - with God, with Nature and with our neighbour. Amen

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