

Tuesday Reflection 18th May 2021

Today's Gospel (John 17:1-11) precedes Sunday's Gospel (John 17:11 ff); the link is in verse 11, when Our Lord in His final farewell discourse prays over His disciples:

I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.

In his homily last Sunday, Fr Naz expanded on this passage as follows:

Even though this is a dangerous world with the threat of evil at every turn, Jesus prays for us, not to be removed and hidden away from the sight of the world, but to be protected in the world. Which means that Christianity is not about separation from the world, it is not about being secluded but rather about taking a stand in the world. It calls for involvement. Why does he pray that we should not be removed from the world? Because we have a significant role to play in this world.

As co-creators, we are called to work *on* this world, to bring it closer to God. We are called to become involved, to make an impact in any way we can. Putting it simply, we are called to be *in* the world and to counter many of the dominant ideologies *of* the world, ideologies based in the main on greed and envy. We are all subject to these ideologies, and have the choice between falling in with them or taking a stand against them and showing through love and humility that there is an alternative.

This reminds me of an American Cherokee story which I read recently:

One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people. He said, "My son, the battle is between two "wolves" inside us all.

One is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.

The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith."

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather: "Which wolf wins?"

The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."

We are called to make a stand for justice and peace and unity, recognising the oneness not only of humanity but of the whole of Creation.

Michael Townson