

## Homily 23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Year A 2020

Isn't it heartening to know that, when we meet one or several others, Jesus is present with us in a special way? Becoming aware of that presence will change the way we act or react in the encounter. When we look back on past encounters, we can experience the presence of Jesus again and again. This month from the beginning of September to the 4<sup>th</sup> October, the feast of St Francis of Assisi, we are celebrating the Season of Creation; called this year *Jubilee of the earth*. We are invited, encouraged, even urged to become more aware of how God is present in creation, in the environment. This will help us not only treat it with more reverence and respect but earnestly make efforts to help heal it. In the old catechism, prayer was *the raising of the mind and heart to God*. Whenever we become aware of the presence of Jesus, of God, in our encounters and in creation, we enter into prayer; a prayer of wonder and praise, of joy and thanksgiving; a prayer seeking reconciliation for the harm we have done and of petition for God to help us become healers and reconcilers, instruments of love and goodness.

Pope Francis says: *"Today we hear the voice of creation admonishing us to return to our rightful place in the natural created order — to remember that we are part of this interconnected web of life, not its masters. The disintegration of biodiversity, spiralling climate disasters, and the unjust impact of the pandemic on the poor and vulnerable are a wake-up call in the face of our rampant greed and consumption. The world was made to communicate the glory of God, to help us to discover in its beauty the Lord of all, and to return to him. This pandemic has helped us rediscover simpler and sustainable lifestyles. The crisis offers us an opportunity to develop new ways of living. Already we have learned that the earth can recover if we allow it to rest: the air becomes cleaner, waters clearer, animals are able to return to places from which they had previously disappeared. Today we need to find just and sustainable ways of living that can give the Earth the rest it requires, ways that satisfy everyone with a sufficiency, without destroying the ecosystems that sustain us. Climate restoration is of utmost importance, since we are in the midst of a climate emergency. We are running out of time, as our children and young people have reminded us. We need to do everything we can to keep the average temperature increase under 1.5°C. Going beyond this will prove catastrophic, especially for poor communities around the world. Let us rejoice that our loving Creator sustains our humble efforts to care for the earth, which is also God's home where his Word '**became flesh and lived among us**' and which is constantly being renewed by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit."*

**Surprise . . . . .**

I work at a barber shop and I recently started giving free eyebrow trims to anyone that had a haircut. **Everyone looked surprised!!**