

Reflection Friday Week 23 – 2020

This past week Jesus has been teaching us many lessons that need no explanation. The simplicity of his teaching belies its profound wisdom. Here's another story for reflection.

Pickup in the Rain.

One night, at 11:30 PM, an elderly African American woman was standing on the side of an Alabama highway trying to endure a lashing rainstorm. Her car had broken down and she desperately needed a ride. Soaking wet, she decided to flag down the next car.

A young white man stopped to help her, generally unheard of in those conflict-filled 1960s. The man took her to safety, helped her get assistance and put her into a taxi cab. She seemed to be in a big hurry, but wrote down his address and thanked him.

Seven days went by and a knock came on the man's door. To his surprise, a giant console colour TV was delivered to his home. A special note was attached. It read:

"Thank you so much for assisting me on the highway the other night. The rain drenched not only my clothes, but also my spirits. Then you came along. Because of you, I was able to make it to my dying husband's bedside just before he passed away. God bless you for helping me and unselfishly serving others." Sincerely, **Mrs. Nat King Cole**

Faustino Reyes is a small-scale farmer in Honduras tells another story . . .

When I was a child, local farmers knew when winter was going to start and how fierce it would be, just by observing nature; the birds singing, the sun and the trees. Man has gradually lost his natural instinct because of technologies imposed on him, destabilising the local economy, putting food sovereignty at risk and destroying natural resources.

Mono-cultivation, intensive livestock farming, slash and burn, have caused deforestation and the disappearance of water springs and wildlife. Man's greed puts the lives of all living beings at risk. This endangers the lives of poor families because these practices are unsustainable. Thousands of years ago the Earth's top soil was darker and harvests were abundant. Now, because of man's intervention, soil fertility is low and needs more investment for it to produce crops. If we don't start to protect natural resources, all too soon we will not have any ground in which to grow crops and hunger will increase globally. In Genesis, God commanded the Earth to produce trees, bushes and plants to feed all the living creatures that live on the face of the Earth, creatures on land, sea or sky. But man has mistakenly become greedy for economic power that has led him to convert the planet into a desert and a hostile climate for himself and other living creatures.

Climate change is manifesting itself through natural phenomena, drought in some places and floods in others. There is an increase in plagues and illnesses in plants and human beings. Nature is wise and is making sure we pay the price for the damage we have done. People resist changing attitudes but they can still recognise good from bad. Man knows that he commits sin by destroying natural resources. For thousands of years he has been producing food from the earth. Now the planet is being destroyed because of bad practice in soil usage. We must stop and recognise the wealth of knowledge that communities and local farmers have about nature and how it works.

Its election time in rural Ireland and a busload of local politicians crash off the road into a field. Emergency services are called to the scene, but no passengers are found. The ambulance crew ask a nearby farmer if he has seen the politicians. *"I buried them"*, he replies. *"Were they all dead?"* Ask the ambulance crew. The farmer said, *"Well, some of them said they were alive but you can't believe anything a politician says, can you??"*