

Reflection Saturday Week 25 - 2020

Given all the restrictions and warnings about the consequences of Covid 19, the writer of Ecclesiastes would have said, *"I told you so!"* Being told that all is vanity can make us feel both gloomy and depressed. In the Gospel, Jesus also seems to pour cold water on all the great things he is doing, the people he is helping, and the uplift he gives to people. If all is vanity, we can take a positive approach and look at ourselves, our life and God differently which is what Jesus is saying. *"Look at me differently."* Maybe, like the apostles, we are afraid to do this because it will force us to face realities we do not want to face but need to. On the positive side Ecclesiastes offers us the life, goodness and beauty of creation as a sign of hope. Recently, I listened to a documentary on the regenerative power of the soil. If we farm the soil correctly, it has the power not only to regenerate but remove the poisonous CO₂ from the air. In a part of Africa using different farming methods, it was possible to turn 14,000 square miles of dry, barren desert into thriving and life-giving farm land in under 10 years. It is a simple process because instead of working the land they let the land work for them. This regeneration is reflected in the life of Jesus. He embraced an ignominious death in order to win life, not just for himself but for all of us; a regeneration of the highest order. The pandemic has led us into a greater appreciation of family and friendship, a discovery of the blessings in caring for others, a deeper love for the elderly and refreshment from walking through the countryside. Whatever the gloom, whatever the darkness, whatever the tragedy, God lives, God loves and God blesses us always.

Let us celebrate that

God creates all things, renews all things and celebrates all things.

That the Earth is a sanctuary, a sacred planet filled with God's presence, a home for us to share with our kin.

That God became flesh and blood, became a piece of Earth, a human being called Jesus Christ, who lived and breathed and spoke among us, suffered and died on a cross, for all humanity and for all creation.

That the risen Jesus is the Christ at the core of creation reconciling all things to God, renewing all creation and filling the cosmos.

That the Spirit renews life in creation, groans in empathy with a suffering creation, and waits with us for the rebirth of creation.

That we will rise with Christ and celebrate a new creation.

Vanity . . .

A scientist was giving evidence at a trial.

Asked to introduce himself he said *"I am the greatest Scientist of my generation!"*

"Surely, Sir you could give yourself a more modest introduction?", asked the lawyer.

"But Sir," he said ***"I am under Oath!"***