

Homily 5th Sunday Easter B - I am the vine 2021

The Celts believed there was an unseen world that surrounded and interpenetrated everyday life. They lived in an unbroken relationship with that world and were enriched by it. They lived simultaneously on multiple levels of being, blending the physical, spiritual and symbolic throughout their activities and culture. They had prayers for everything: for greeting the day, going to bed, milking, looming, cooking, bathing, herding, banking the fire and setting out on a journey. Alexander Carmichael wrote *"The sacred Three, to save, to surround, to shield, the hearth, the house, this eve, this night, Oh! this eve, this night, and every night, each single night, Amen."* The "three" in this case being the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In the Celtic world, all of creation was ensouled including the earth. The interplay of the five elements earth, air, fire, water and spirit gave rise to each unique rock, tree and well of creation. The sacredness of the environment was tangible transcending time and space, opening one to a direct experience of the divine without the intervention of doctrine or dogma. Spiritual practice was held outside on sacred land, the power of the elements and the spirits of land and legend were an active, vital part of the practice, which enhanced the tangibility of their presence. As Christianity began its conversion of the Celtic world, a deep relationship with nature was characteristic of the Celtic saints, who believed that knowledge of God lay not with the study of the scriptures, but with God's creation. By living a simple life, they strove to become one with that creation and God, and lived in deep harmony with nature. Jesus was a forerunner of this sense of the sacredness of the elements of creation. He saw the spiritual and sacred presence of the divine in the vine whose sap flowed through all its branches and the fruit that it produced. Calling himself the vine, Jesus gives us the sense that he could see the power of the spirit flowing through him, through those around him and through nature, wherever he went. It is no wonder we are told of the gifts and fruits of the Spirit that flow in and out each of us and through creation; some gifts and fruits being stronger on one than in another but together in an abundance. Become present to this flow of life rooted in Jesus and be transformed. **Malcom Guite:**

How might it feel to be part of the vine?
Not just to see the vineyard from afar
or even pluck the clusters, press the wine,
but to be grafted in, to feel the stir
of inward sap that rises from our root,
Himself deep planted in the ground of Love.
To feel a leaf unfold a tender shoot,
as tendrils curled unfurl, as branches give
a little to the swelling of the grape,
in gradual perfection, round and full,
to bear within oneself the joy and hope
of God's good vintage, till it's ripe and whole.
What might it mean to bide and to abide
in such rich love as makes the poor heart glad?

Tim Vine

So, I went to the dentist. He said "Say Aaaaah." I said "Why?" He said "My dog's died."

I went on one of those once in a lifetime holidays, last week... I won't be doing that again.

Conjunctivitis.com

That's a site for sore eyes.

I threw out my old vacuum cleaner today...

It was just gathering dust.