

Reflection Wednesday 1st Week Advent 2021

Meals often occur in the life of Jesus. Our prime celebration of Jesus' life and of our salvation is in a meal we familiarly call the Eucharist. Focusing only on the food, essential and important as it is, be aware that Jesus also wanted us to come together and, being together, to talk and share with each other about our faith and what's happening in our lives. We gather together on Sundays but do not always have time to talk with others and hear their stories. So, Pope Francis, in his wisdom, has given us the opportunity to do this in our synodal encounters. It would be good if we could actually do this during the eucharist itself. In zoom meetings, organisers will invite people to break off into small groups or even one to ones so that people can share their reasons for being at the meeting and about their hopes and dreams. These are so enlightening and uplifting there is never enough time. People emerge strengthened in their relationships, in their hopes for the group and affirmed in their being present. These synodal conversations will hopefully become a regular part of our community life in the future. The following poem links the Eucharist to nature:

The centuries have settled on this table,
deepened the grain beneath a clean white cloth,
which bears afresh our changing elements.
Year after year of prayer, in hope and trouble,
were poured out here and blessed and broken, both
in aching absence and in absent presence.
This table, too, the earth herself has given
and human hands have made. Where candle-flame
at corners burns and turns the air to light.
The oak once held its branches up to heaven,
blessing the elements which it became,
rooting the dew and rain, branching the light.
Because another tree can bear, unbearable,
for us, the weight of Love, so can this table. **Malcolm Guite**