

Homily 22nd Sunday Year C 2022

John O'Donohue writes: *When you take the time to draw on your listening-imagination, you will begin to hear this gentle voice at the heart of your life. It is deeper and surer than all the other voices of disappointment, unease, self-criticism and bleakness. All holiness is about learning to hear the voice of your own soul. It is always there and the more deeply you learn to listen, the greater will be the surprises and discoveries that unfold. To enter into the gentleness of your own soul changes the tone and quality of your life. Your life is no longer consumed by hunger for the next event, experience or achievement. You learn to move from the treadmill and walk on the earth. You gain a new respect for yourself and others and you learn to see how wonderfully precious life is. You begin to see through the enchanting veils of illusion that you had taken for reality. You no longer squander yourself on things and situations that deplete your essence. You know now that your true source is not outside you. Your soul is your true source and a new energy and passion awakens in you.*

That voice of the soul that John O'Donohue writes about, that gentle voice within you, is the voice of God. Sometimes the voice of God is a silence; not an empty silence or frightening silence as though something dreadful is about to happen, but a captivating silence that is uplifting, reassuring, affirming and fulfilling. It is when we feel deep within that this is the right place and right time. Discovering God's presence is breath-taking and filled with wonder. In these moments, any thoughts about self cease to exist.

Thinking of others works:

When the supermarket teller added up my groceries, it was £12 over what I had in my purse. I began to remove items from the bags when another shopper handed me a £20 note. *"Please don't put yourself out,"* I told him.

"Let me tell you a story," he said. *"My mother is in the hospital with cancer. I visit her every day and bring her flowers. I went this morning, and she got mad at me for spending my money on more flowers. She demanded that I do something else with that money. So, here, please accept this. It is my mother's flowers."*

Little Philip was walking home in the rain with his mother after mass. It finally stopped raining as they rounded the corner, where to their surprise and delight appeared a vivid double rainbow in the sky.

"Doesn't it look like an artist painted this rainbow?" his mother exclaimed. *"I bet God painted this just for you!"*

"Yes," replied Philip, *"God did it, and he did it left-handed."*

Confused, his mother asked him, *"What makes you say God did this with his left hand?"*

"Well," said Philip, *"we learned today that Jesus sits on God's right hand."*