



27th Week of Ordinary Time: 3rd/4th October

Reflection / Homily – Mgr Daniel McHugh

“May the Lord Bless Us All the Days of Our Life.”

A few days ago, 27th September, we heard of the launch of the latest NASA Landsat Satellite which monitors the changes in the earth’s climate, forestry and much more. Especially interesting is the fact that this programme now gives us a 50-year observation of changes to the earth’s surface from space. As I write this Reflection on 29th September I am hearing reports of the Milan Youth Gathering preparing for COP 26 (Conference of the Parties) and in particular the comments of Greta Thunberg, the climate change activist, who said of Politicians “words sound great, but lead to no action”. On the same “Today” Programme the former President of Ireland Mary McAleese was interviewed about the world gathering in Glasgow coming up in November and the likelihood of the target for restricting global warming to 1.25% being met by the nations of the world. She sounded fairly optimistic, I thought.

We are all becoming more conscious of the importance of “caring for our common home” as Pope Francis said in his Encyclical “Laudato Si”. Francis of course comes to these grave issues not only with the eyes of science, but also with the eyes of Faith, looking at the world from the perspectives of Faith and God’s wonderful gift of Creation.

And, that is what the readings for the 27th Sunday leads us to also. In a Homily in the Chapel of “Casa Santa Marta” some years ago now, Pope Francis commenting on the beautiful Psalm 8, (which is reflected in a favorite hymn I chose for the Burning Bush VLOG this weekend: “O Lord my God when I in awesome wonder consider all the worlds thy hand has made”) Francis said that “the earth is entrusted to humanity to preserve it through work...God therefore has given humanity a certain royalty, because God does not want a ‘slave’ but a ‘Lord’, a King, entrusted with a task.” He said “As [God] worked in Creation. He has given us the work of advancing Creation. Not to destroy it; but to make it grow, to care for it, to keep it and make it carry on.”

In the Book of Genesis reading for the 27th Sunday, man is given the task of naming “all the cattle, all the birds of heaven and all the wild beasts.”

Then in an aside from his reflection on Psalm 8 the Pope said: “It’s funny, I sometimes think, ‘he did not give us money.’ We have everything. Who gave us money? I don’t know. Grandmothers have the saying that ‘the devil enters through the pocket.’ This maybe.”

Pope Francis continued. And, finally God created mankind in his image, male and female he created them.” Then he went on to explore the gift of “love” beginning with the love shared between a man and a woman: “male and female he created them. It is not good for a man to be alone. And he made his partner,” the Pope said “In love, God gives man

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love and a “dialogue of love”, which the Holy Father said, must have been the first – between man and woman.”

I was amused last week when I was having a haircut talking to my Barber about the family, his girls: the second one has just gone to University. He said he and his wife had decided to go out for a drink and a chat, just the two together! A new experience. I said “I bet you’ll be talking about the girls!”

Apart from a special focus on married love in Creation, this Sunday also focusses on children. In Psalm 8 we are all God’s children. The Pope said “He gave us His DNA, that is, He made us children, created in His image, in His image and likeness, like Him...we are ‘like gods’, because we are children of God.”

A few days after getting my haircut I was with a young family for Sunday lunch. We were talking about passing on the Faith to our children. It was special: Mum was telling me how she talks with the girls when they get home from school, and talks through their questions. Going to senior school can be a time of great change, and a challenge to the children in terms of how to react to very different viewpoints. It was great to see how Mum and Dad are taking this forward sensitively and with love, and prayer that the children may come through to a deeper understanding of their Faith.

Yes, on the one hand we are looking at our world and its challenges through the eyes of science, but we need also to look at it through the eyes of Faith; and the place where Faith is first lived, the family. We need prayer to help: let us pray as we did in the Response to the Psalm for the 27th Sunday:

*“May the Lord bless us
all the days of our life”*

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