

Daniel's reflection for week-beginning 24th December -

Christmas Light – in the heart of our universe and in the universe of our heart

Orbiting the moon on Christmas Eve 1968, the crew of Apollo 8 read the opening chapters of Genesis to a worldwide audience of billions, signing off with, 'Merry Christmas, and God bless all of you on the good Earth.'

When negotiating the first human steps on the moon, Buzz Aldrin brought a blessed wafer with him. 'I ate the tiny Host,' he wrote, 'and swallowed the wine.' One small sip for a human: one giant cosmic celebration for humanity.' At this first Christmas Communion in the silence of space we hear: 'You, my beloved Sister Moon, you, my shining stars, you are my Body, too.' . . .

On the night before Christmas, theologian Karl Rahner hears God whispering to us: 'When you celebrate tomorrow say to me, 'You are here. You have come. You have come into everything that exists, into everything that we are.' Say only that one thing. That is enough. It is Christmas. Light the candles. They have more right to exist than all the darkness. It is the Christmas that lasts forever. '

And then, in that silent moment, the serious wonder of it strikes us: it is we ourselves, lit from within by the radiance of God, who are called to be those candles of hope, shining incarnate light on a world and a church lost too often in the dark

(Unmasking God pp 127-128)