

Daniel's Reflection for week beginning 24th February –

An Earthquake in your Heart

Once we equate God with life itself a transformation takes place in the way we believe. Once we remove everything that separates divinity and humanity, heaven and earth, grace and nature, then we begin to truly and freely live and move in another milieu. Once we use the same name for the Gracious Mystery and Mother of all becoming, and the primal energy of creation and ongoing evolution, our faith cannot ever be the same again. And once we commit to identifying God's intimate presence in our evolving, sensual perception of the world's most beautiful artistry, creativity and imagination, in our every breath and heartbeat, in our daily darkness and invincible light, then we are living the incarnation of God in Jesus. And we are then, also, adoring the only adorable reality – the mystery of being itself. It signals the death of a God 'out there', and the birth of the God at the burning heart of Creation itself and at the core of your own being. If God could have revealed himself without the world', wrote Meister Eckhart, 'he would not have created it.' This is the revelation of an astonishing secret. It is a new moment of grace. It's like an earthquake in your heart. And you are afraid no more.

When this 'catholic, sacramental faith-imagination' becomes second nature to you, a profound simplicity envelops your soul. What is this sacramental vision? When you learn to really look at what's before you, the delight and pain that's around you; when you feel something of the hidden joy and despair of others, their desire for life and their cold despair; it is then, also, and only then, that you reach the place of intimacy with the divine, incarnate God. Jesus added nothing extra to the initial Creation. His Father had not forgotten anything! What was added, when the time was right, was the love and meaning in it all. What Jesus introduced and accomplished by his death and resurrection was not a legal contract of atonement with his demanding Father; it was the depth and invincibility of love. Love transforms darkness, death and sin. It is the very energy of Creation, of evolution. Jesus, 'the Human One', Love personified, brought a new understanding of our world and our lives, a different way of seeing everything through the lens of an unconditional love.

When everything we see, touch, hear and smell is perceived as the embrace of the divine arms; when the winter chill, the city noises, the brilliance of artists and the revelations of scientists provide glimpses of an incarnate God; when the New Universe Story captures our hearts with a profound and transforming wonder, when the courage and hope of oppressed people on a mutilated Earth are experienced as the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit within, then, and only then, are we living within the Incarnation. To do this faithfully we need a sacramental community of love around us. 'Let us pray – for the faith to recognise God's presence in our world. O God our Father, open our eyes to see you at work in the splendour of creation, in the beauty of human life. Touched by your hand our world is holy. Help us to cherish the gifts that surround us, to share your blessings with our brothers and sisters, and to experience the joy of life in your presence.' (Opening Prayer for the 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time/Year A. Old Translation; Roman Missal)

(An Astonishing Secret -Foreword, 13,14)