

Ninth Set of Reflections - Reclaiming the Goodness of Humanity, Nature, Matter and Evolution

The famous photograph (of the earth seen from space for the first time) filled our hearts with such powerful sentiments. Some of the reflections of the astronauts read like psalms of praise or eucharistic doxologies. On of them, a Chinaman, echoed God's great love for the world when he said, 'Seeing the earth for the first time, I could not help but love and cherish her.' Edgar Mitchell wrote that his first view of the planet was 'a glimpse of divinity.'

And Russell Schweickart's meditation is profound and moving: 'You realise', he wrote, 'that on that small spot, that little blue and white thing, is everything that means anything to you – all of history and music and poetry and art and death and birth and love, tears, joy, games, all of it on that little spot out there. You recognise that you are a piece of that total life . . . And when you come back, there is a difference in that world now. There is a difference in that relationship between you and that planet, and you and all those other forms of life on that planet, because you have had that kind of experience.' (Michael Dowd, *Earth Spirit: A Handbook for Nurturing an Ecological Christianity*, Twenty-Third Publications 1992. p95.)

Ideally, our Catholic Church with its fine traditions of rites and rituals, its elemental symbols and its endless source of graced power in the true meaning of incarnation, would be the champion and sacrament of a holistic holiness, of a creation spirituality, of an incarnational theology such as proclaimed by a host of mystics, theologians and prophets throughout the centuries. These are the people who have revealed some of the rich mystery of the Word-become-flesh, as they celebrate the potential divinity of all creation and of all flesh.

A huge part in the vision of a renewed and vibrant church turns on a reclamation of the wholesome and whole-hearted trust in the goodness of humanity, of nature, of matter, and most especially, of evolution.

(Lost Soul pp102,103)