

## Daniel's Reflection for week beginning 23rd September -The Catholic-Christian Faith – told as a Love Story Re-telling the Story

The whole process of Evolution is the work of the Mystery's Holy Spirit, first the long, slow and patient preparation, the raw material of the Incarnation of the long-awaited Human-Divine person. Called Jesus, he was, and is, the completion of the first phase of the Mystery's intense longing. In his death, resurrection and scriptures, he is the One to bring the universe and its inhabitants to their final and glorious end. The unique role of Jesus, the Human One, is to reveal that the driving energy, the central force of the whole amazing story, process and finality, is Love. And that only love will inspire the community of Earth's peoples to persevere in pursuing the Mystery's dream. He had to die to reveal the great suffering at the heart of true living and loving. And to reveal the great darkness that runs through all light. And that is why, even as a young man, he flung himself into the heart of that darkness and then re-appeared in the shining light of Resurrection.

Eventually, a gathering of his friends began to believe in the possibility of this transformation, this transfiguration, this evolutionary transition. Called Christians, and on fire with this conviction, they worked to spread the amazing news across the whole world. That is how the Holy River of Evolution continues to run. There's a line of light, a flow of love, a wave of enlightenment that runs through all growing things, human and non-human. You could say the light that erupted in the Big Bang is the same light that lit the way for every subsequent era of Evolution, the same light that fell on the sleeping infant from the Bethlehem star, the same light that surrounds the human hands that share the Bread of Life, the same light that dawns afresh each morning, that glistens in the eyes of each one that falls in love, the very same light in the windows that welcome us home to heaven. This River of Light, this Flow of Love, was never, even for one nano-second, absent from Creation – and never will be. Why? Because it is the eternal and living heart of every created, living creature, and without it there would only be annihilation and death. Everything about this group - the Mystery's Community of Love on this Earth (Christianity, for instance) - is to remind us of the love and meaning in the story of our lives, not to forget the divinity we carry within us, or lose heart at the seemingly impossible challenges that lie ahead for us – to make a heaven of this beautiful, beloved and broken planet of the Mystery we call God's body. This Community is there to remind us that Love is the very essence, energy and DNA of our nature. From the first flash of Creation's light we have been securely held, nourished and saved by our Mother-God, unconditionally loved, no matter what.

We have sacraments to clarify yet again for us the true story of our beloved being and becoming. Sacraments add nothing new to our understanding of life except the reminder, the inspiration and celebration that everything is already within, already fundamentally sacred. Without a feeling for the sacramentality of the world, of the universe, we will struggle with a true sense of the individual sacraments. In baptism, for instance, we celebrate the divinity of our birth, the priesthood and prophecy of our humanity, the loving presence of the Christian community to protect us. In Eucharist we honour the divine within-ness of things; we have the celebration and confirmation, in a scrap of bread, that the fullness of the Mystery of Creation and Incarnation is not only already in ourselves but in every speck of dust on Earth or in space (Pope Francis). The entire universe is the Mystery's primary revelation to us. We live in a sacramental world. Beyond, for instance, the individual, personal and redemptive implications of the great feasts of the Church such as the Birth and Death of Jesus the Christ, the Resurrection, Pentecost, Ascension and so on, those central 'events' are utterly universal and cosmic 'moments' as well as personal, signifying the effects of a more enlightened theology and the scientific wisdom of the evolving heart of our faith and its practice.

The Churches desperately need the support of qualified theologians and artists and others to update, renew and inspire their creative thinking around imaginative liturgies, education and spirituality.

*(From one of Fr. Daniel's unpublished papers 2018)*