

Seeds of Glory Week Beginning 29th June

From its very beginning nearly fourteen billion years ago, creation was already permeated and filled with God's compassionate presence. There never was a time or space in the history of evolution when God was absent from the world. In the person of Christ this tremendous love story has been finally revealed. The healing wholeness has been accomplished. The human is now the home of the divine. What was begun in creation is completed in the incarnation. The long-awaited moment has brought a stunning vision to human awareness. The search for God is no longer a dualistic journey outwards; it is the recognition of what is already throbbing within us. That is what we celebrate in the sacraments.

But the immediacy of the eternal God keeps slipping our mind. It is divine power that energises our daily lives. Grace is life fully lived. Moral theologian Fr Sean Fagan explains in 'Sacraments and the Spiritual Life' an article in *Doctrine and Life* (Vol 23, no 8: 1973), that Francis of Assisi, with his eyes of faith, had no difficulty with this kind of vision. For him the sun and the moon, fire and water, animals and humans, all spoke of God. As Christians, this insight is offered to all of us. The smallest particle of creation is a theophany, a revelation of God – the acorn, the grain of sand, the shrill siren of a passing train. All too often our act of seeing stops at appearances, failing to explore the love and meaning at the core. We need eyes to read the wind, the stars, people's faces as they pass by, in such a way as to go below the surface. But there are moments which stand out from all others, moments which come like a gift, moments when 'the focus shifts and a single leaf becomes a universe, a rock speaks prophecies and a smile transforms a relationship.' (p40)

We call such moments sacred, because in them we glimpse something of the sacredness of life, the wonder of God. Following on from this, Fr Fagan writes, 'what needs to be emphasised is that our sacramental celebration becomes more meaningful when it is seen as a high point, a peak moment, a special occasion in a life that is already sacramental in its own right. The sacraments are of a piece with the rest of life and reality, not eruptions from a different world. In this sense it is more helpful to approach them from the context of life as a whole. They are moments of insight, bringing home to us, each in its own way, the deeper meaning of our life and destiny. The sacraments declare forth what is otherwise hidden in the darkness of the world, in the routine of everyday. They bring into focus and draw our attention to what we tend to ignore and lose sight of when we are busy about many things.' (ibid. p42) . . .

The Irish poet Patrick Kavanagh finds God in the scattered fragments of each day. Probing into the commonplace he contemplated the eternal. Writing about the loving mystery that is easily ignored or overlooked because of its hidden nature, Karl Rahner feels the need to 'dig it out, so to speak, from under the refuse of the ordinary business of life'. This detection of the quiet gift of the abundant life, waiting to be discovered in the shadow and light of each night and day, is the work of the mystic. There is no doubt that we are called to awaken and nourish the mystic already alive and well within each one of us. To deny this child of wonder within us, to refuse to acknowledge our lonely mystic, is to reduce our life to a grey dullness, to starve our imagination, to stifle the Holy Spirit.

(*Treasured and Transformed* pp129, 130, 131)