

Daniel's reflection for week-beginning 29th October - We Are All Sacraments of God's Love

In the beautiful theology of creation and incarnation, of nature and grace, the fleshing of God has revealed, once and for all, what it means to be truly human. We achieve our true humanity, not by running away from the world and its joys and pleasures, or by turning our backs on it in fear or doubt. Christ does not reveal what it is to be divine but what it is to be human. It is often said that we are not human beings trying to become spiritual. We are spiritual beings trying to become truly human. That our often faint and distorted God-likeness might become purified, clarified, intensified and completed in us, is the purpose of creation and incarnation.

This completion, this transformation is not something added on from outside, so to speak, to our 'mere' human nature - a kind of divine layer on top of our ordinary humanity. It is rather the revelation of the intrinsic meaning of our very lives. The graced unfolding of our lives is God's dream within us becoming true.

There is a lift and a depth about a theology of nature and grace. It discerns the free movement of the Holy Spirit wherever people are committed to genuine human values and humanitarian pursuits. It identifies the longing for God in all human longing. It sees God's spirit ranging across the whole spectrum of creation, of history and of individual experiences in ways far beyond the constricted and limited places, people and things to which many of our textbook theologies, catechisms and homiletic suggestions would restrict it. It takes its shape and texture from the passion of Jesus for making possible for everybody, the actual here-and-now experience of the abundant life. And from the wild freedom of the Holy Spirit.

Moral theologian Father Kevin Kelly has written: 'Evangelisation is really about something very simple, wonderful and exciting. It is about being truly human, each in our own unique way, and both translating and interpreting God's love story in the language of our modern age - and so helping people read that same story in the wonder of their own being and even in the ambiguity of their lives.'

(Begin with the Heart pp162,163)