

2012

### Week 9 - Bringing to Birth the Image of God

We remember the words of St Theresa of Avila – ‘I have no hands now but yours, no feet, no tongue, no eyes, to reach out, to comfort, to encourage, to heal my broken people . . .’ It is as though Jesus was placing the responsibility on her and on us to unfold and reveal the reign of God in our midst. Like midwives we are honoured with the task of bringing to birth the image of God in those around us. Michelangelo described his intention when working with his sculptures as releasing the angel in the block of marble. We are finding new hope in a truly traditional, liberating theology of revelation that is becoming increasingly accessible through the popularising work of our best theologians and communicators . The effort to be aware of, sensitive to, and as far as possible , comfortable with such a dynamic theology, brings new life and meaning to our understanding of incarnation, of church, of sacrament – of our lives.

A contemporary role for the priest, (for each person), imaged against this background, would see him as the one who first enables people to hear more clearly the voice of their own thirst, and then, who helps them understand that such awareness and sensitivity is already stimulated by the action of grace in their souls from the beginning. Incarnation reveals that it is within the current and the ordinary that God’s heartbeat is heard. St Theresa of Avila sees God as the one who strolls amongst the pots and pans of daily chores. Patrick Kavanagh finds God in the bits and pieces of each night and day. When taken seriously into our self-understanding, when the meaning of our regular sacramental celebrations are radically coloured by this revelation, then a sea-change takes place in what it means to be a Christian. We do not bring God to people because God is already walking in these peoples’ shoes. The Good News we bring is through the delicate awakening of this awareness.

‘Evangelisation is the good news that touches the origin, memory, identity and destiny of life itself.’ (Gabriel Daly, *Creation and Redemption*, Gill and Macmillan, 1988)

*(New Hearts . . . : pp 31,33)*