

Daniel's Reflection for week beginning 14th April –

The whole world is raised at Easter

In our celebrating of the Paschal Mystery maybe we skip too quickly from Good Friday to the Easter Vigil. It is Holy Saturday, silent and empty, that holds the vital key which includes us, human beings, at the heart of Easter. It is the timeless moment when we, at our lowest, are sought and found by Jesus. Having descended to the very womb of the earth, he gave the earth his divine life forever. This is the new creation of a transfigured earth into which, not out of which, Christ died and was raised. At its inner core, the world is now transformed. It is a world in which everything belongs. In a short while we will be celebrating the intrinsic unity of the cosmic, the human and the divine – a unity which began in God's imagination before the world began. We will struggle with this truth.

The dualistic virus that has infected the ecclesiastical system over the centuries has great difficulty in believing the truth of this blessed vision, of seeing the presence of the risen Christ in the most ordinary, unpredictable and 'secular' places. It has great trouble, in fact, from the very start, in believing what the Incarnation reveals about the divine value of all creation and all lived lives. There is a chilling edge to ecclesiastical references to 'our Godless' lives, society or world – the very places that God, named or not, is utterly delighted to inhabit. Christ is risen because in death he redeemed forever the deepest parts of all human hearts, the innermost center of all earthly existence, where he is pleased to live. Karl Rahner writes,

'What we call his resurrection – and unthinkingly take to be his own private destiny – is only the first surface indication that all reality has already changed in the really decisive depth of things. The new creation has already started, the new power of a transfigured earth is already being formed from the world's innermost heart, into which Christ has descended by dying . . . He is here. He is the heart of this earthly world and the mysterious seal of its eternal validity.'

Jesus did not begin to save the world by transfiguring first the visible symptoms. Because the waters of grief and guilt still flow on the surface where we stand, and because the evil of injustice, war and greed still carves new marks in the face of the earth, we fear that Easter really is about the next life. We wonder whether the world is absolutely saved. But, as with sick and shallow institutions and churches, the resistant surface is usually the last to collapse. Easter faith is about believing in the light while it is still dark. The Triduum is never over. And a vital contribution still belongs to us.

Much dying to self is demanded so as to complete in our time what Jesus achieved once-for-all at that first Passover. What remains now is that Risen Love should burst forth from the grave of our own hearts. Divine energy must rise from the core of our being, where it lives as power and promise. We are not saved from the world, we are saved for the world; made whole again so as to be reconcilers and peacemakers for humanity and for the earth itself. It has already happened once-for-all in history; only we can make sure it is happening today.