

Webcam Broadcast C-19 26+8

Hello Everyone! I hope you are all safe and well.

It's Monday 23rd November 2020.

My basic Message this Monday is:

God is good. And not only that, God is Goodness itself.

God created us humans good. And even though we humans allowed ourselves to become tainted by sin, we are still given the opportunity to become redeemed sinners.

Last time I focused a little on the coming of sin into the world at the Fall. Revisiting that scene, we can say that before the Fall, the first humans were blessed with original grace and freedom from suffering and death. Such was life in the Garden of Eden.

But our First Parents allowed themselves to be inveigled by the cunning of the Serpent. Their sin opened a door which they could not shut. They both fell into the trap of shifting the blame away from themselves onto another. After the Fall, they were expelled from the Garden of Eden, and sin with its consequences of evil, suffering and death arrived on the scene.

We can say that God allowed these events to unfold out of his absolute respect for the gift of free will with which God had endowed humans from the beginning. God continues to respect human freedom.

In the immediate aftermath of this great biblical drama, God speaks to the Serpent (a word used for 'dragon' and 'snake'), which has now lost its legs and its splendor and becomes a mere oversized worm, slithering along the ground.

God says to it:

***I shall put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will bruise your head
and you will strike his heel. (Gen 3:15).***

The 'He' referred to is a reference to a particular future descendent of the woman.

This is the Great Promise that evil will not eventually prevail, a firm hope for the future.

From the earliest times of the Church this promise has been seen as a prophecy of the Messiah and the triumph of goodness. God's love and goodness, celebrated in the Creation, is still apparent. It's worth noting that no other culture, apart from that of the Bible, has a promise that the Serpent's head will be crushed.

The account continues with God addressing the man with these somber words:

*For dust you are
and to dust you shall return. (Gen 3:19).*

Next Sunday we begin the Season of Advent, the Season of Hope, which leads to the commemoration and celebration of the Birth of Jesus over 2,000 years ago. We do so every year as part of the ongoing struggle to keep the hope of that Original Promise alive, that we can in fact become a little more like Jesus. St Paul uses the phrase 'to be conformed to the image of his Son (namely Jesus)'. (Rm 8:29). This is, as it were, a condition for becoming a redeemed sinner.

To paraphrase: even though we know in Adam we blew it, the Promise is held out to us that in Jesus we are given a second chance.

We have indeed much to look forward to. St Paul put it this way: 'where sin increased, grace was superabundant.' (Rm 5:20). The Good News is that through Jesus that superabundant grace is channeled our way.

Be gentle and patient with yourself in these difficult and uncertain times.

Tóg bog é.

Until next time.
Keep safe.
Slán agus beannacht.