

Sunday Message from Fr William for the Fourteenth Sunday of the Year 2023

continued from last Sunday

It's time to introduce you, if you're not already acquainted, with the third person you will come to know deeply in the 'other world'. He is called 'the Spirit' (John 7:39). What is he like? He is pure love. Where is he? He pervades the whole universe. Because he is pure spirit we can't know him with our physical senses – sight, sound, touch etc. These have evolved to detect and analyse the physical/material world. The Spirit is not of this world. He may pervade the universe, but he is not part of it. If we can't see him or hear him or touch him, how can we possibly know him? In this world we know him by his effects. He is a bit like the wind. We don't see the wind, but we see its effect, swaying the trees, playing with our kites, and propelling sailing ships across the ocean. He is like our breath. We don't see our breath, except maybe on a frosty day, but our breathing is palpable, and gives us life.

The Spirit pervades the universe including us humans. He moves us to do good things. He moves us to love. He himself is love in its purest and boundless form. Whenever we love – that's the Spirit moving in us. We may be highly evolved and complex organisms, but without the Spirit we are no more than that. With the Spirit in us we become more than complex organisms. This perfect integration between Spirit and the human organism gives birth to a new reality – the human spirit. It's one of the reasons he is sometimes called 'Creator Spirit'. You could say that it's only with the Spirit in us that we become fully human, and fully ourselves, each in our own unique individuality. The creation of our human and individual subjectivity is a work in progress, and a work of bilateral collaboration between the Spirit and ourselves.

How does he come in? Only when invited, and then only to the extent that we are ready. He takes us at our own pace. Please don't think of this as a takeover or the invasion of an alien force. On the contrary he is the one thing that should be in us. He is native to our minds and hearts and bodies. He is part of who we are. In the Christian tradition he comes in the Sacrament of Baptism, and he comes in the Sacrament of Confirmation. But his coming is by no means limited to these moments of Christian initiation. His coming is not circumscribed. The ways in which he can come are limitless and ever new.

In this world we cannot know him by our senses, only by his effects. And yet the human spirit can have a certain intuition of his presence in their lives, in themselves, in the world, in the universe which he pervades, an intuition that is not limited to Christianity or to any one religion. In the 'other world' we can expect a new spiritualisation of the body, and of our bodily senses. (*JP2 ToB 67. 09.12.81*) Then we will know him in the new and perfect way that belongs to the 'other world'.

Meantime, and in this world, I invite you to grow day by day, and year by year, in your personal knowledge of the Spirit. Call upon him often. 'Come, Creator Spirit, come into our minds and hearts. Move us to do good things. Fill us with your love. Fill us with yourself.'

To be continued...



Fourteenth Sunday of
the Year, 9 July 2023