

Sunday Message from Fr William for the Twenty-First Sunday of the Year 2023

*The 'Other World' continued*

Do not be surprised that the Son going from the Father into infinite Freedom in the 'other world' seems to follow the pattern in this world of a child becoming separate from and increasingly independent of his mother. However, it's not that the Son coming from the Father follows this pattern. It's the other way round. The Son coming from the Father in the 'other world' is the primary reality. A child becoming separate from and increasingly independent of his mother is a reflection in this world of this primary reality. This world is filled with reflections of the 'other world'. Look out for them as we go forward!

The infinite going forth of the Son from the Father in the 'other world' is the infinite Freedom of the Son. From this position of infinite going forth, the Son returns to the Father in an infinite return. It's the second of these twin dynamics – infinite going forth and infinite return. And this infinite return of the Son to the Father is the dynamic of infinite Love.

Above all, we need to understand these twin dynamics of Freedom and Love in terms of 'giving'. Remember this question – What is the Father like? He is all giving, giving, giving. (See 16 July 2023). As Father it's fundamental to what he is like. But the Father's primary act of giving is not in this world. It's in the 'other world'. His primary act of giving is in giving being/existence to the Son – infinite being/existence. The Father gives being/existence to the Son as an 'image' and as an 'expression' of himself. In this act of giving being/existence to the Son, the Father also gives him infinite Freedom. And it is from this extreme point of infinite Freedom that the Son gives himself in an infinite act of self-giving to the Father, an infinite act of Love.

Self-giving is the essence of love. We see this in marriage, another finite reflection of the 'other world'. In marriage, freedom is a pre-requisite for self-giving, a pre-requisite of love. Just as the finite acts of self-giving in this world are the essence of what we mean by human love, so the infinite self-giving of the Son to the Father in the 'other world' is the essence of infinite Love.

Remember how this looks when projected into this world – Jesus Christ 'sent by the Father', then 'going to the Father'. His whole intervention in this world is one of mission and return: incarnation (becoming human, and finite), birth, sent to his own people, rejection, death; then, from this extreme point, resurrection, ascension, and return to the Father's heart. The first chapter of John's Gospel, sometimes called the Prologue of the Gospel of St John, traces out this two-way trajectory, like an overture that outlines 'at a glance' the whole thrust of the Gospel: salvation, but at the same time revelation – revelation of the life of the Trinity in the 'other world'.

In the 'other world' it's all gift: the Son coming forth from the Father in infinite Freedom; the Son returning to the Father in infinite Love. It's time to bring in the Spirit.

*to be continued...*



Twenty-First Sunday of the Year, 27 August 2023