Meditation on the Trinity and Care of our Common Home, Reflections inspired by Pope Francis and Franciscan Spirituality with the thoughts of Sr Marie DW

This reflection and meditation can be done without the Youtube video (recommend the use of Youtube if you can). For those who struggle with hearing, the text below can also be used to support the video. Our Youtube presentation is an invitation to spiritually join regular meditators at Wisdom Centre (presently isolated and meditating in their own homes). The tradition we meditate in is Centering Prayer which is fully inclusive of all traditions of Christian Meditation and welcoming of World Traditions.

The text is on the screen with narration. Music and a count down timer are part of the presentation. For technical reasons, the reflection may have some disruption to the sound quality. To overcome this, a transcript is below.

Begins with usual opening prayers and introductions (Audio Visual or follow using text below)

Welcome to Christian Meditation in the Centering Prayer Tradition.

Opening Prayer: Welcome to our weekly meditation from Wisdom Centre I would like to honour the 5th anniversary of Pope Francis' book entitled Laudato Si' – Praise be to you that hit the world in 2015 and this in the light of last Sunday's feast of the Trinity.

We will start with an opening prayer coming from Pope Francis: All powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace that we may live as sisters and brothers, harming no one. Teach us to discover the worth of each person and thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognise that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. Amen

Readings and Reflections: The title Laudato Si' comes from the opening words of St Francis' Canticle and has as subtitle 'Care for our common Home'. St Francis reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us "Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth who sustains and governs us and who produces various fruits and herbs." The document captures the social, economic and environmental justice in building and protecting Our Common Home. It gives us a pathway of hope as we face the planet's environmental crisis.

I mentioned that it took the world by storm. In fact it was addressed to the whole world and not just to Catholics as these documents usually are. Pope Francis writes, "The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change. The Creator does not abandon us, he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of

having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home."

This book had been hailed as the most important document of our age and is used extensively by governments, environmentalists, formation houses and ordinary people like you and me. Francis' predecessor Benedict XVI wrote "the book of nature is one and indivisible", and includes the environment, life, sexuality, the family, social relations and so forth. Of course, great strides have been made in the last five years in sensitizing our populations to the situation of our common home, not least involving our young people who are extra sensitive to the future of our planet. I recently watched a celebration of Laudato Si' organised by young people in Ireland and was impressed by the enthusiasm of a group of children from a village school who sang songs to conscientize us with such gusto. The young people of our world certainly give us much hope.

Pope Francis' 2019 message for the Season of Creation is particularly relevant this year, as the world continues to struggle against the coronavirus pandemic. "As the world experiences deep uncertainty and suffering in the midst of a global emergency," said Msgr. Duffé, "we are called to recognize that a truly healthy recovery means seeing that 'everything is connected' and repairing the bonds we have broken."

The lockdown because of Covid 19 has changed our appreciation for our planet. Our skies, our roads have been free from traffic and noise and instead we have been listening to our singing planet. We have been able to distinguish between the different bird songs and, as Mary Colwell writes in the Tablet of "an atmosphere vibrating with cadences of joy, the liquid gold song of a blackbird, a wren providing a trilling, a pulsating aria that cannot be ignored….a bird singing in the garden has produced an intense connection to what it is to be human. The music of nature can prompt us to question ourselves, it draws us to a reality that does not need our participation, or even our presence. We are a sideshow to their world. Birdsong existed before we hunted and gathered, before we lived in cities, before we created gardens. The music of the birds has enlivened our planet for many millions of years; it is humbling to have come so late to the journey of this singing planet."

So will the Covid 19 lock-down lead to a new seeing, a new way of doing and being? Five years on, Laudato Si' is even more relevant now Coronavirus has followed the crisis of climate change showing the "cracks in the planet we inhabit", as the document puts it.

Pope Francis continues in #158 "In the present condition of global society, where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable, the principle of the common good immediately becomes, logically and inevitably, a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters. This option entails recognizing the implications of the universal destination of the world's goods, it demands before all else an appreciation of the immense dignity of the poor in the light of our deepest convictions as believers. We need only look around us to see that, today, this option is in fact an ethical imperative essential for effectively attaining the common good."

We can think of many examples as Coronavirus rages around the world, the situation in the US, in Hong Kong, in our inner cities. “I can’t breathe, I can’t breathe.” Is ringing in our ears, from George Floyd, from those suffering badly from coronavirus, from our polluted planet…are they connected, is this why people are demonstrating in their thousands for a more just society? In the next segment we will hear what Pope Francis has to say about relationships.

Last Sunday was Trinity Sunday so let us listen to what Pope Francis has to say about the Trinity and the relationship between creatures, in his book Laudato Si’ #238-240.

“The Father is the ultimate source of everything, the living and self-communicating foundation of all that exists. The Son, his reflection, through whom all things were created, united himself to the earth when he was formed in the womb of Mary. The Spirit, infinite bond of love, is intimately present at the very heart of the universe, inspiring and bringing new pathways. The world was created by the three persons acting as a single divine principle, but each one of them performed this common work in accordance with their own personal property. Consequently, “when we contemplate with wonder the universe in all its grandeur and beauty, we must praise the whole Trinity.” (John Paul II)

For Christians, believing in one God who is Trinitarian communion, suggests that the Trinity has left its mark on creation. The reflection of the Trinity was there to be recognised in nature “when that book was open to human beings and our eyes had not yet been darkened”. St Bonaventure, himself a Franciscan, teaches us that each creature bears in itself a specifically Trinitarian structure, so real that it could be readily contemplated if only the human gaze were not so partial, dark and fragile. In this way, he points out to us the challenge of trying to read reality in a Trinitarian key.

The divine Persons are subsistent relations and the world, created according to the divine model, is a web of relationships. Creatures tend towards God, and in turn it is proper to every living being to tend towards other things, so that throughout the universe we can find any number of constant and secretly interwoven relationships. This leads us not only to marvel at the manifold connections existing among creatures, but also to discover a key to our own fulfilment. The human person grows more, matures more and is made more holy in the extent that he or she enters into relationships, going out from themselves, to live in communion with God, with others and with all creatures. In this way they make their own that Trinitarian dynamism which God imprinted in them when they were created. Everything is interconnected and this invites us to develop a spirituality of that global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity.”

Introduction to Meditation: I invite myself to become still…gently allowing my mind and body to settle in whatever way I feel drawn. I may wish to focus on my breathing as I slow down. I prepare myself in silence to enter deeper into the mystery of the Trinity. As I breathe in I invite the Spirit to live in me. As I breathe out, I imagine getting rid of any fears, doubts, self-reliance, and lack of trust. Let us be conscious of those of us joining in this prayer tonight and our interrelationships as we are invited to draw deeper into the rhythm

of this eternal dance of love. The meditation will be 25 minutes, beginning with the sound of the gong.

Beginning Meditation

Bell Sounds..
25 minute meditation begins. .count down timer starts
Bell sounds – meditation ends.

Closing Prayer from Pope Francis:

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.
They came forth from your all powerful hand,
They are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love.
Praise be to you!

Son of God, Jesus
Through you all things were made.
You were formed in the womb of Mary, our Mother,
You became part of this earth
And you gazed upon this world with human eyes.
Today you are alive in every creature in your risen glory.
Praise be to you!

Holy Spirit, by you light
You guide this world towards the Father's love
And accompany creation as it groans in travail.
You also dwell in our hearts and you inspire us to do what is good.
Praise be to you! Amen
Let us now take a few moments of private prayer. (soft music 30 secs)

Thank you for meditating with us, please join us again soon

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