

Homily

Sunday Week 2 (B)

14 January 2018

At the 9.30 Mass the children preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation gave us a wonderful presentation on creation and sustainability.

It's one of those things I find deeply depressing, seeing our beautiful world degraded and damaged, rubbish strewn everywhere, the super-rich in their gated communities and the National Health service on its beams end.

The focus of this year's preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation is the Easter Vigil. The first reading of the Vigil is the 7-day creation story of Genesis and at the end of each day it says "*God saw all that he had made, and indeed it was very good*". How can we rediscover, reinvent, recreate that fundamental goodness of our world, of our universe?

The beginnings of an answer can be found in today's readings. First of all, we have to listen. Spend a night with Samuel. Listen to the silence. Listen to the cry of the poor. Listen to the blood that cries out for justice. "*Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.*"

Second, we have to watch, look and see. We must remove the scales from our eyes. We must develop that inner eye, that inner vision, the eyes of our hearts. "Look, there is the Lamb of God," says John the Baptist as he points to Jesus. Gaze upon Jesus. Look towards him. Behold the beauty of the Cross.

Third, simply stay with the Lord. Spend the rest of the day with him. Spend the rest of your life with him. Be his disciples. "*Here I am, Lord, I come to do your will.*"

Fr Pope Francis, in his ground-breaking Encyclical *Laudato Si*, the renewal of creation, personal integrity and peace between nations are all part of the same struggle. Negotiation and practical politics all play their part. But ultimately the struggle is a spiritual one, the struggle to listen, to see and to **be**. And so, we shall sing at the Easter Vigil in ten weeks' time:

*Send forth your Spirit, O lord
and renew the face of the earth.*

Fr Michael