

Dear All,

Well, all that really I need to say is that Holy Week begins on Sunday! It is a most blessed of weeks, and I can only say that if you make time to share in the liturgies of the Church over these days, liturgies honed over centuries, you will be moved.

*The ever present reality...*

I am reading a book about the Eucharist at the moment written by a catholic bishop in Kazakhstan whose childhood during the Soviet regime required his family travelling many miles each week to attend clandestine masses. The cover of the book has the arresting photo you see opposite of mass being offered in a bombed out cathedral in Germany in 1946. The book includes a description of the scene:

*'A great feast is being celebrated....the world has in the literal sense collapsed, but the calendar of the liturgical year commands the celebration of this feast. The liturgy is celebrated in complete independence from the prevailing circumstances; however catastrophic, these circumstances must recede for the duration of the feast...not under the influence of blindness but in the knowledge that through the liturgy is opened up to us an ever-present reality that remains through all the epochs of history..'*

We know that in the coming week, in various parts of the world, and perhaps even in this land, people will make their way to worship often at danger to themselves. They will do so because the liturgies unite them with eternity and the will of our Father and his loving purpose for them. These liturgies have been and remain the classic actions of God's holy people whatever the circumstances, be it the horror of destruction or the contentment of peace.

*There may be very good reasons why a Christian does not attend to worship during Holy Week, but to my mind they need to be very good reasons...*

Forgive me, if this seems rather doctrinaire! But it is my duty above all other duties, to call the people of God to their own first duty, the adoration of God in the service of Jesus Christ...and of course to be faithful to that calling myself.

*Thanks for the compliments...*

Talking of worship, thank you for those who expressed kind remarks about the reconstituted 'Brunswick Four' who sang at the beginning of the 10 a.m. mass last Sunday. A little four part harmony doesn't go astray every so often, and that little piece by Purcell, 'Thou knowest Lord the secrets of our hearts' is a gem. I reckon the current tradition of the cantor or cantors introducing our worship with a little something is a good addition to our Sunday mass. It reflects the old tradition of a sort of preparation to still the mind as we seek to journey upwards. For those who serve at the altar, this has already begun as we gather to say Psalm 43 in the priest's vestry before mass begins. It includes the words, 'I will go unto the altar of God, the God of my joy and gladness'... The saying of the psalm is a tradition that goes back as far as the 4th century.

*On Sunday evenings a different style...* The Lamb 'B & B' has I think had a good beginning and we will see how it develops.



Further discussion after the bible study facilitated by a little lubrication.....



Catastrophe recedes but not under the influence of blindness...

The Melbourne Anglican rang the other day to say they wanted to do a piece on this initiative. Their roving reporter was somewhat intrigued by the combination of Bible and beer, as I might say were a couple of folk who made their way in for a coffee during the week and saw the A frame outside the café. "You're not Baptists then?" was their opening line...I was able to assure them we take our Bible more seriously than we do our beer! Of course the separation of Bible and beer is a rather modern, Reformation idea...

*From the sublime...*

And talking of beer, sometimes I am grateful to the government of the day! The State government are keen that businesses are as energy efficient as possible, and are giving away new fridges. Given the number of approaches via phone or Facebook I have had, a number of firms are on a bit of commission!



And so it was that yesterday we took possession of a new drinks fridge, courtesy of Her Majesty's Government (is that how things are described here—I'm not sure!) While, having been influenced by the superior palate of the English, I am well disposed to warm beer, it's not a good look to server one up on a warm day in Melbourne! We already have a large one that caters for both our café provision and our Thursday lunch vittles, but it's amazing how full it is, and how it gets clogged up with drinks...



*And finally,* I am looking forward to renewing my acquaintance with Francesca this Sunday. I hope you are too. Remember we meet a little earlier at 9.45...

With love,

+ Lindsay