



Creation Season

Proper 22, Year B, October 4, 2009

Humans interacting with 'this fragile Earth, our island home'

We see the world in all its glory

A Bulletin Insert for the congregations of the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota

Lessons (Revised Common Lectionary)

Job 1:1; 2:1-10

Psalm 26

Hebrews 1: 1-4; 2: 5-12

Mark 10: 2-16

Genesis 2: 18-24

Psalm 8

Alternate Reading

The Earth is at the Same Time Mother (Hildegard of Bingen)

The earth is at the same time mother, she is mother of all that is natural, mother of all that is human, She is mother of all, for contained in her are the seeds of all.

The earth of humankind contains all moistness, all verdancy, all germinating power.

It is in so many ways fruitful. All creation comes from it. Yet it forms not only the basic raw materials for humankind, but also the substance of the incarnation of God's son.

Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and to give more than we either desire or deserve: Pour upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things for which we are not worthy to ask, except through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Savior; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Most people live in two separate realms most of the time. We can represent these as two big separate spheres, one of the physical world and the other of non-physical things such as faith, love, pleasure, appreciation, joy, sadness. The physical world includes the things we can see, touch, measure and weigh, and are the basis for our understanding of the natural world around us. Some things such as atoms are too small to see without magnification, and some things like stars of other galaxies are too far away to see without a telescope, but are still part of the physical world. The non-physical world includes most of the things we associate with the practice of religion, and some people feel a disconnect between science and religion. Two separate spheres! How can the Bible stories of God's creation of the earth be reconciled with the scientific explanation of evolution of species from simple beginnings of life forms? And why is the Church of today celebrating a creation season, holding solstice events and forming both study groups and advocacy groups promoting sustainability? Well, some people do live mostly in one sphere or the other. But for most of us, these two spheres overlap. They overlap every time we participate in sacraments where ordinary materials of the earth become vehicles of God's presence: as in water of baptism, or the body and blood of Christ, or the oil with which a dying person is anointed. The spheres overlap when we visit a mountain, and have what we call a mountain top experience, awe, joy, something we may always remember.

For a long time the church has focused almost entirely on salvation history with little concern for the physical world, as though nature's function is to be the backdrop for the human drama to play out. However, we have come to a broader concept of incarnation: God not only present in human life, but in all life and in the rocks and waters and planets and their moons. And in all that is.

This is our "Creation Season". God as Creator is being honored and thanked in a season of the year, just as we celebrate the seasons related to Jesus birth, life and death, (living on earth in both spheres as God and Man) and the coming of the Holy Spirit in Pentecost. "Sing Out Earth and Skies".

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