

Incarnation

The Word was made flesh

He lived among us

And we saw his Glory

One of the tools that the enemies of faith use to destroy the relevance of religion is to romanticise core beliefs beyond lived experience.

Our God is truly wrapped up in mystery

But then our world is also wrapped up in mystery

Ask a scientist of the modern age and you will receive opinion and not irrefutable fact

From the smallest element of an atom

To the extreme features of a perceived black hole

Explore beyond comfort, to greater understanding, and the biggest discovery is ignorance.

We are not however excluded from the consequence of the mystery of science, as we flick a switch, or listen to a doctor's diagnosis

Equally we are not excluded from the consequences of mysterious faith as we pray, and learn, and act.

Mankind can only bear so much reality.

Thus each of us is obliged to live within our limitations while constantly being called upon to push at the boundary's.

St John in the Gospel

makes the core statement of the incarnation of the second person of the Trinity

God made man

The Word was made flesh

He lived among us

And we saw his Glory

Here again if we explore beyond comfort, to a greater understanding, then the biggest discovery will be the extent of our ignorance.

However there is value in humility

There is great value in mirroring the humility of God and accepting the pragmatic and practical realities of human existence.

The Word was made flesh

Christ established the all too human community of the Church

The most fundamental expression of his presence is in bread and wine, food and drink

The scientist does not begin the life of exploration with a perception of abstract notions of matter or energy. But that scientist begins with the humility of learning to count. One Two Three. Of learning to read ABC.

The person of faith does not begin the life of exploration with a perception of abstract notions of divinity, trinity, redemption. But that person of faith begins by responding to the needs of felt physical existence, of learning from family and community, of realising the basics, the food and drink of life.

The son of God begins teaching not in the lecture hall or Cathedral

But in birth, and blood and poverty

The practical pragmatic use of materials available to find shelter

The practical pragmatic use of political insight and exile in Egypt

The practical pragmatic use of a home and the life of a child in Nazareth.

You could smell the stable that Jesus was born in.

You could smell the fear of the refugees running from Herod

You could smell the cooking of a favourite meal of the holy family.

While at one and the same time being in the presence of the second person of the Holy Trinity.

For you and I, it begins and perhaps gets no further than humility

Never capable of understanding the science of a computer, but able to turn it on

Never capable of understanding the love of God, but able to live within the blessing.

A blessing which is practical and pragmatic

A blessing which finds expression in lived history and community

A blessing that lives among us

A blessing which given the humility of beginning from where we are now

Has the promise of seeing ever greater glories.

An infinite journey of discovery

