

'CREATION SUNDAY' - HOMILY – 1 OCTOBER 2017

WELCOME TO CREATION SUNDAY

Already gifts of creation have been processed at the beginning of our celebration. In a few moments parish members, including seminarians, will dance and sing the gifts of bread and wine in procession. Shared in language according to Samoan culture.

This weekend our parish celebrates our Care for Creation Sunday, the weekend prior to the Feast of St Francis of Assisi on October 4th.

In today's 2nd Reading – **Letter of Paul to the Philippians 2:1-11** we hear in verse 2 of the New Revised Standard Version

"make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind"

or in the Jerusalem Bible translation,

"then be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind. That is the one thing which would make me completely happy."

CREATION

BUT HOW WE RELATE THESE WORDS TO CREATION?

WHAT IS OUR COMMON PURPOSE?

WHERE IS THE JOY, THE HAPPINESS?

St Paul in his **Letter to the Romans 8:22-23** says,

"We know that the whole of creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies."

*"whole of creation has been groaning in labour" can be translated "all the creation groans **together** and travails in pain together"*

In this translation, we note the use of the word "together" twice.

Not I but **WE**. Not alone but **TOGETHER**.

In caring for creation, we work together. That is part of the joy, the happiness.

The **Letter to the Ephesians 2:10** says,

"For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life."

We can translate literally what God "has made us" as "masterpiece".

WHAT MASTERPIECE?

The masterpiece that **WE** are **CREATED** in **CHRIST JESUS** for **GOOD WORKS**.

And literally this “way of life” is translated by “we should walk”.
Walking is an action. We are going somewhere.

On this Creation Sunday, we celebrate -

- our participation in the whole of God’s creation,
- our journeying – walking - together,
- our attentiveness to the groans of our earth and universe,
- our groaning together,
- our being in labour pains together,
- our being created in Christ Jesus,
- our purpose, our mission of good works – the living of the ‘Good News’ of Jesus.

As science develops, we now hear of the theory of the universe being created out of nothing.

We begin to understand a little of the mystery that God can create out of nothing.

Planet Earth is still in the process of being created, renewed, and recycled.

It is still groaning in birthing - with earthquakes, volcanoes, lava flows, storms and floods.

We only have to study the effects of the continental plates to gain insight into ongoing creation.

We also need to stand back and gain a fuller picture of creation.

And to share not only our knowledge and research, but also our awe and wonder of creation.

And we turn to God our Creator in awe.

LOVE

God is love.

God creates in love.

We are created in God’s image and likeness.

WE ARE CREATED IN LOVE, TO LOVE TOGETHER.

WHAT THEN IS OUR ROLE, OUR WAY OF LIFE, OUR WALKING TOGETHER?

God invites us to **WORK TOGETHER**, to **WALK TOGETHER**, in the work of creation.

To **LOVE TOGETHER.**

Not spoiling, not destroying, not wasting, not abusing creation.

But caring together for Earth, our common home.

And **recognizing the sacredness of God’s work.**

The way we treat our common home reflects on the way we love.

TODAY’S GOSPEL

The Gospel today **Matthew 21:28-32** gives us a parable.

The father asks his two sons to work in the vineyard.

ARE WE LIKE THE FIRST SON WHO SAYS NO, REFLECTS ON IT,

AND RESPONDS IN HELPING WITH THE WORK IN THE VINEYARD?

ARE WE LIKE THE SECOND SON WHO LIES, SAYS YES, BUT DOESN’T DO A THING TO HELP?

IN CARING FOR CREATION, ARE WE LIKE THE FIRST SON OR THE SECOND?

On this **CREATION SUNDAY**, aware of the response of the two sons in the parable -

- DO WE CELEBRATE OR IGNORE THAT WE ARE CALLED TO WORK IN THE VINEYARD OF CREATION?
- DO WE RECOGNIZE OR IGNORE THE GROANING OF OUR EARTH AND UNIVERSE?
- DO WE RECOGNIZE OR IGNORE THE GROANING OF THE HUMAN FAMILY?

- DO WE TAKE UP THE CROSS TOGETHER TO SHARE THE GROANING OF OUR WORLD AND HUMANITY IN SOLIDARITY?
- OR DO WE DROP THE CROSS? OR DO WE RUN AWAY FROM THE CROSS?

- DO WE PARTICIPATE TOGETHER IN THE FULLNESS OF GOD’S CREATION?

- WE ASK OURSELVES – WHAT ARE OUR FAVORITE SYMBOLS OF CREATION?
- EACH OF US MIGHT HAVE DIFFERENT SYMBOLS THAT STRIKE A CHORD DEEP WITHIN US?

OUR SYMBOLS

We pause and identify our own symbols that nourish and move us. (Pause)

We offer those symbols to God now. (Pause)

CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS, we share the labour pains together.

We actively live our purpose, our mission of good works – the living of the ‘Good News’ of Jesus’ in our world.

TOGETHER IN CHRIST JESUS let us care for our common home.

Let us pray together, the prayer from *Laudato Si’* by Pope Francis.

Fr Gerry

[Fr. Gerry Hefferan – Creation Sunday – 1 October 2017]

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/100117.cfm>]

[Parish Facebook: <http://bit.ly/parishFacebook01102017>]



Image: 'Parable of the Two Sons in the Vineyard' | www.FreeBibleImages.org