



**St. David's Parish
Monastery Road, Pantasaph,
Holywell. CH8 8PE**



**Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 12, 2023**

Environment and creation

Pope Benedict XVI

"The environment is God's gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility toward the poor, toward future generations and toward humanity as a whole." "In nature, the believer recognizes the wonderful result of God's creative activity, which we may use responsibly to satisfy our legitimate needs, material or otherwise, while respecting the intrinsic balance of creation. If this vision is lost, we end up either considering nature an untouchable taboo or, on the contrary, abusing it. Neither attitude is consonant with the Christian vision of nature as the fruit of God's creation."
—Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, June 29, 2009

READINGS

1st Reading **Sir 15:15-20**

2nd Reading **1 Cor 2:6-10**

Gospel **Mt 5:17-37**

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Introduction: Today's readings challenge us to choose freely and wisely to observe the laws given by a loving and caring God. He revealed His laws to His Chosen People through Moses and the prophets in the Old Testament, and through His own Son, Jesus, in the New Testament. For the Israelites, the Torah was not a set of laws but the instruction or *teaching* intended to promote the holiness and wholeness of each believer. It was the revealed will of a caring God, for the people with whom had He made His covenant.

Scripture lessons: The first reading from Sirach contains the clearest statement in the Old Testament concerning the God-given freedom of the human will. It

exonerates God from all responsibility for evil in the world. *“If you choose, you can keep the commandments . . . before you are life and death, whichever you choose shall be given you.”* In the second reading, Paul challenges his Corinthian believers to appreciate the wisdom of God’s saving plan for His people, a plan hidden for ages but now revealed by the Spirit. In the selection from the Sermon on the Mount in today’s Gospel, while challenging his disciples to live a life of justice and righteousness which should exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus, as the new lawgiver, sets forth his own position with regard to the Law given through Moses, by providing new interpretation and meaning for the old laws. In today’s Gospel passage, Jesus explains the real meaning of three Mosaic laws concerning murder, adultery and false oaths.

In Search of Freedom; Against Reason Fallen Ill and Religion Abused- By Pope Benedict XVI (Continue –)

When reason, now with the investigation into the genetic code, snatches at the roots of life, ever more does it tend to see human being, not any longer as the gift of God (or of Nature), but as a product to be made. Man is “made,” and what man can make, he can also destroy. In all this is the concept of reason made ever flatter. Only what is verifiable, or to be more exact, falsifiable, counts as rational; reason reduces itself to what can be confirmed by an experiment. The entire domain of the moral and the religious, belongs then to the realm of the “subjective” - it falls outside of common reason altogether. One no longer sees that as tragic for religion - each one finds his own - which means that religion is seen as a kind of subjective ornament, providing a possibly useful kind of motivation. But in the domain of the moral, one seeks to be better.

Reason fallen ill and religion abused, meet in the same result. To a reason fallen ill, all recognition of definitively valid values, all that stands on the truth capacity of reason, appears finally as fundamentalism. All that remains is reason’s dissolution, its deconstruction, as, for example, Jacques Derrida has set it out for us. He has “deconstructed” hospitality, democracy, the state and finally, the concept of terrorism, only to stand in horror in the face of the events of September 11th. A form of reason that can acknowledge only itself and the empirical conscience paralyzes and dismembers itself.

A form of reason that wholly detaches itself from God, and wants simply to resettle Him in the zone of subjectivity, has lost its compass, and has opened the door to the powers of destruction. It is the duty, in these times, of us Christians to direct our concept of God to the struggle for humanity. God himself is Logos, the rational first cause of all reality, the creative reason out of which the world came

to be, and which is reflected in the world. God is Logos - Meaning, Reason, Word, and so it is through the way of reason that man encounters God, through the espousal of a reason that is not blind to the moral dimension of Being.

There is a second point. It belongs, as well, to a Christian belief in God, that God - eternal reason - is Love. It follows, too, that He does not represent a relationless, self-orbiting Being. Precisely because He is sovereign, because he is the Creator, because He embraces everything, He is Relation and He is Love. Belief in the God who became human in Jesus Christ, and in his suffering and death for humanity, is the highest expression of this conviction: that the heart and hinge of all morality, the heart and hinge of Being itself, and its inmost source is Love. This declaration represents the strongest repudiation of any ideology of violence whatsoever; it is the true apologia of humankind and of God. But let us not forget that the God of Reason and Love, is also the Judge of the world - the guarantor of justice - before whom all men must make account. There is a justice love will not annul.

There is yet a third element of Christian tradition that I wish to mention, that, in the afflictions of our time, is of fundamental importance. Christian belief - following in the way of Jesus - has negated the idea of political theocracy. It has - to express it in modern terms - produced the worldliness of states, wherein Christians along with the adherents of other convictions live together in peace. Thus is distinguished the Christian belief that the Kingdom of God does not exist as a political reality, and cannot so exist, but rather, through faith, hope and love is it attained, and the world transformed from within. But under the conditions of temporality, the Kingdom of God is no worldly empire, but rather, a call for the freedom of humanity and a support for reason that it may fulfill its own mission. The temptations of Jesus were ultimately about this distinction, about the rejection of political theocracy, about the relativity of states and reason's own law, as well as about the freedom to choose, which is meant for every person. In this sense, the secular state follows from of a fundamental Christian decision, even if it required a long struggle to understand this in all its consequences. This worldly, "secular" state incorporates, in its essence, the balance between reason and religion, which I have tried here to present. However, it stands against secularism as an ideology, which would, as it were, construct the state from pure reason, released from all historical roots, and which can thus recognize no moral foundations that are not discernable to reason. All that is left it, in the end, is the positivism of the greatest number, and with it the abasement of right; ultimately, it is to be governed by a statistic. If the countries of the West were to commit wholly to this path, they could not indefinitely withstand the press of the ideologues and political theocrats. Even a secular state may - indeed, must - find its support in the formative roots from which it grew, it may and must acknowledge the foundational values without which, it would not

have come to be, and without which, it cannot survive. Upon an abstract, an a-historical reason, a state cannot endure.

FEB 4/25 COLLECTIONS

Gift Aid collection	136
Loose cash	138.79
Tea/Coffee	35.22
Total	310.01

SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION

**Sacrament of Confession at 11.30 am on Saturday
ON EMERGENCY ANY TIME 0741-749-4277**

Please Pray for our Sick

Ann Parry, Mary Toumaine, Patrick Nagle,
Phillip Mc Greavy, Anthony Parry

ANNIVERSARIES (Feb 12-18)

Sr. Winefrid, '79: Margaret Ann Mart, '89: Bernard Joseph Sullivan, 2000: Josephine Cummins, '03, Daniel Cadogan, Anne Glynn, Mary Turner, Sr. Stephen, '70: Maureen Merrick, 2000, Sr. Stephen, '70: Maureen Merrick, 2000: Jack Hughes, '99: Joseph Cross, '06. Josephine Burgess '99:, Henryk Zak, '95: Margaret Swarbrick 2013, Hilda Mongan, William Spillane, Elizabeth Kennedy, '13., Peter Murphy,

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