

TRINITY NEWS

WEEK 20.
May 14, 2023

A Reading from *Hymn of the Universe*

By Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Blessed be you, harsh matter, barren soil, stubborn rock: you who yield only to violence, you who force us to work if we would eat.

Blessed be you, perilous matter, violent sea, untamable passion; you who unless we fetter will devour us.

Blessed be you, mighty matter, irresistible march of evolution, reality ever new-born; you who, by constantly shattering our mental categories, force us to go ever further and further in our pursuit of the truth.

Blessed be you, universal matter, immeasurable time, boundless ether, triple abyss of stars, and atoms and generations: you who overflowing and dissolving our narrow standards of measurement reveal to us the dimensions of God.

Blessed be you, impenetrable matter; you who, interposed between our minds and the world of essences, cause us to languish with the desire to pierce through the seamless veil of phenomena.

Blessed be you, mortal matter: you who one day will undergo the process of dissolution within us and will thereby take us forcibly into the very heart of that which exists.

Without you, without your onslaughts, without your uprootings of us, we should remain all our lives inert, stagnant, puerile, ignorant both of ourselves and of God. You who batter us and then dress our wounds, you who resist us and yield to us, you who wreck and build, you who shackle and liberate, the sap of our souls, the hand of God, the flesh of Christ: it is you, matter, that I bless.

I bless you, matter, and you I acclaim: not as the pontiffs of science or the moralizing preachers depict you, debased, disfigured—a mass of brute forces and base appetites—but as you reveal yourself to me today, in your totality and your true nature.

Your realm comprises those serene heights where saints think to avoid you—but where your flesh is so transparent and so agile as to be no longer distinguishable from spirit.

Raise me up then, matter, to those heights, through struggle and separation and death; raise me up until at long last, it becomes possible for me in perfect chastity to embrace the universe.

Psalm 148.

Response: Sing to the Lord a new song.

7 Praise the LORD from the earth, * ye dragons and all deeps;

8 Fire and hail, snow and vapours, * wind and storm, fulfilling his word;

Response: Sing to the Lord a new song.

9 Mountains and all hills; * fruitful trees and all cedars;

10 Beasts and all cattle; * creeping things and flying fowls;

Response: Sing to the Lord a new song.

11 Kings of the earth, and all peoples; * princes, and all judges of the world;

12 Young men and maidens, * old men and children.

Response: Sing to the Lord a new song.

13 Praise the Name of the LORD: for his Name only is excellent, and his praise above heaven and earth. 14 He shall exalt the horn of his people: all his saints shall praise him; * even the children of Israel, even the people that serveth him.

Response: Sing to the Lord a new song.

SAINTS:

Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, 19 May. Dunstan was born near Glastonbury around 910 into a noble family. He received a good education and spent time at the court of the King of Wessex. A saintly uncle urged him to enter the monastic life; he delayed, but followed the advice in time, on recovering from an illness. Returning to Glastonbury, Dunstan lived as a monk, devoting his work time to creative pursuits: illuminating, music, and metalwork. In 943 the new king made him abbot, and this launched a great revival of monastic life in England. Starting with Glastonbury, Dunstan restored discipline to several monasteries and promoted study and teaching. Under two later kings, he rose to political and ecclesiastical eminence, being chief minister and Archbishop of Canterbury under King Edgar. This enabled him and his followers to extend his reforms to the whole English Church. In 970 he fell from political favour but continued as archbishop, preaching and teaching. He died in 988.

Alcuin of York, Abbot of Tours, 20 May. Alcuin was descended from a noble Northumbrian family. Although the date and place of his birth are not known, he was probably born in the year 735 in or near York. He entered the cathedral school there as a child, continued as a Scholar and became Master. In 781, he went to Aachen as adviser to Charlemagne on religious and educational matters and as Master of the Palace School, where he established an important library. Although not a monk and in deacon's orders, in 796 he became Abbot of Tours, where he died in the year 804. Alcuin wrote poetry, revised the lectionary, compiled a sacramentary and was involved in other significant liturgical work.