

TRINITY NEWS

WEEK 41.
October 08, 2023
Proper 22

Laudate Deum

This week on the 4th of October we celebrated the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of not only animals, but in a sense, of the whole natural world. In his famous '*Canticle of Creatures*' he sings of Brother Sun and Sister moon, Brother, Wind and Sister Water, emphasizing our oneness, our kinship with all God's creatures, and the radiant beauty of Creation. In his life, too, St. Francis is said to have had a special relationship with animals; there are many stories of him taming wild beasts, conversing with all sorts of creatures, and even preaching to the birds! No wonder, then, that it's on this feast that in many churches, people bring their pets and their potted plants to church to be blessed; or, that October fourth is the date Pope Francis has chosen to issue the follow up to his Encyclical on the climate crisis, '*Laudato si*' entitled '*Laudate Deum*' or 'Praise God.'

'*Laudate Deum*' is an urgent plea to all people, especially those who govern, to stop denying and dithering and face the fact that the earth is warming at an alarming rate, and that the overwhelming scientific consensus that this is due in large part to human activity, especially our ever-growing reliance on fossil fuels. Francis identifies modernity's culture of hyper-individualism, the Darwinian nihilism of late capitalism and its relentless pursuit of, (unsustainable) growth as the underlying causes of the crisis and the central role of fossil fuels in our economy the main reason for this refusal to take the science seriously.

As most of you probably know from some of my past sermons, I pretty much agree with Francis here, though I would add that the difficulty we all have in accepting climate change is the sheer enormity of the challenges it poses. Sure, there have been many changes in the climate, some quite drastic, over the ages, but none within human memory – things have been more or less stable since the beginning of recorded history – and the changes that are being called for to address the situation quite simply unimaginable.

But something must be done and the sooner the better. More and more people are beginning to realize that this is not something somewhere out there in the future, but something that is already upon us. But of course the question is, what can we do?

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I certainly can't answer that, but I can say that the first step, from a Christian perspective is repentance – collectively – and forgiveness for the human behaviors that have contributed to this and our failure to exercise proper stewardship over creation, over this planet, that God entrusted to us. The second is to believe in God's forgiveness, proclaim his love for us, and trust that once we turn to him, he will see us through this. We must not abandon this hope. But it starts with repentance.

Finally, some commentators are saying that the Pope – and by extension, the Church should stay in its lane and not meddle in these affairs. I reject that. This is God's creation, not ours, and so everything in creation has moral weight. The Church is authorized to assess that moral weight, to point it out, to 'read' the situation and to speak truth to power. The solutions then, are the task of those who have the expertise.

This is an important question and one that concerns us all. If any of you would like to discuss any aspects of it with me, please feel free to contact me at revjmock@gmail.com.



NEXT WEEK, INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S SUNDAY.
JOIN US FOR POTLUCK LUNCH.
Bring a dish to share. Sign up on the board.

What is the use or wealth, if not to benefit the poor? What is privilege for, if not to place at the disposal of the unblest?
[Charles Henry Brent, *Adventure for God*, 1920]



Buildings and Grounds Committee

The Buildings and Grounds Committee is looking for new members.

The Buildings and Grounds Committee oversees the renovation, improvement and development of the Church, all the buildings within the compound, including the Rectory, and the grounds including the carpark area. We have a number of interesting and important projects to be carried out now and in the future and this is your opportunity to join us and make a real difference to the present and the future of our Church.

If you would like to get involved, please speak to or email any of the current committee members who are: Andy Malpass, Phil Thoburn & Edison Yap.

Our contact details are available from the Church office or you can see us after Church most Sundays.

Phil Thoburn, *Chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee*

SAINTS OF THE WEEK:

Paulinus, First Bishop of York, 10 October. Born in the latter part of the sixth century, probably in Italy, Paulinus was among the second group of monks sent by Pope Gregory to England to assist Augustine in his work. He went with the party that accompanied Ethelburga to Northumbria, where she was to marry the king, Edwin, who subsequently took his wife's Christian faith as his own. Paulinus built the first church in York in about the year 627 and was its first bishop. He travelled much north and south of the Humber, building churches and baptising new Christians. He had to flee for his life, however, when Edwin was killed in battle by the pagan king, Penda of Mercia, and Paulinus became Bishop of Rochester. He died on this day in the year 644.

Wilfrid of Ripon, Bishop of York, 12 October. Wilfrid, or Wilfrith, was born of a noble family in Northumbria in about the year 633. He was educated at the monastery of Lindisfarne, but disapproved of what he judged to be their Celtic insularity. He journeyed to Canterbury and then to Rome. He spent three years at Lyons and was there admitted as a monk. He was appointed Abbot of Ripon and took with him the Roman monastic system and Benedictine Rule, which he immediately introduced. At the Synod of Whitby, his dominance was largely responsible for the victory of the Roman party over the Celts and, when he was elected Bishop of York, he went to Compiègne to be consecrated by twelve Frankish bishops rather than risk any doubt of schism by being ordained by Celtic bishops. There were upsets first with Chad and then with Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury, but the Roman authorities took his side and he was eventually restored to his See. After further disputes, he resigned the See of York and became Bishop of Hexham, spending his remaining years in the monastery at Ripon. His gift to the English church was to make it more clearly a part of the Church universal, but his manner and methods were not such as to draw people close to him at a personal level. He died on this day at Ripon in the year 709.