



HOMILY by Father Robbie Low

Holy Trinity-Year A-June 7<sup>th</sup> 2020

***Readings: Exodus 34: 4-6. 8-9, Psalm Daniel 3: 52-56, 2 Corinthians 13: 11-13, John 3: 16-18***

The enforced lifestyle of a hermit has, in recent weeks, given time for many otherwise neglected opportunities. Catching up with friends and family, phoning parishioners, uninterrupted prayer and study, joining the universal church in virtuality and enjoying (mostly) how other churches celebrate. One of the unlooked for trivial additions is that I have taken to doing crosswords – an addiction of my late mother’s that I swore I would never get hooked on. So far I have completed nearly 300 of the Times Crossword Book (Quick Crossword I should hastily add before you assume you are in the presence of a genius– about ten minutes each) but perfect mental exercise in between writing bursts and study.

One of the clues recently was ‘Moses and Solon’- 9 letters. (It’s always the religious ones that hold me up) . The connection between the old Athenian proto-democrat and his earlier Jewish prophet leader finally and obviously dropped. The answer was ‘LAWGIVERS’. This has stayed in my mind.

Moses was certainly the man who presented the Law to Israel. We all recall the descent from the mountain, tablets in hand , and the discovery of an outbreak of ‘Mad Cow Disease’ as the people, led by the wretched

Aaron, had all too quickly reverted to paganism and the worship of the Golden Calf.

Moses, post his furious smashing of the tablets, had to go back up the mountain and implore God for a new set. Duly given.

Today's Old Testament passage takes place in the context of that second giving of the Law. The truth is, of course, that Moses is the Messenger – God is the Giver of the Law. And that Law sets both the final move from Man's ignorant polytheism and idolatry to his ultimate encounter with the One True God. It is the moment when the individual revelation to Moses at the Burning Bush becomes the corporate revelation to the People of God.

Monotheism is the truth. The nature of that One True Creator God thus, necessarily, determines the Law.

This is critical because, were Moses to come down the mountain today, he would be smashing those tablets all over again. The fundamental understanding of the divine law has, in the once upon a time heartlands of the Faith, been trashed in an orgy of moral incontinence and reversion to pagan materialism.

At the root of all this is a profound failure of historical understanding and philosophical decay. This was flagged up to me recently in a conversation with the fiancé of one of my daughter's friends. He is a bright guy and had done philosophy at Uni. (As my philosophical mentor and drinking buddy, 'the Prof', will tell you, when it comes to philosophy, yours truly is not the sharpest knife in the box).

We went deep quickly and I talked about Aquinas and Natural Law-foundational stuff in our Judeo-Christian understanding.

To my amazement the young man stopped me to say that, while he had heard of this, they had not done it at college because (they were told) it was outmoded and unnecessary. Indeed, he said as politely as he could, I was the first person he had ever encountered who brought it up – never mind believed it. I was, in the words I think I shall have engraved on my

tombstone, 'shocked but not surprised'. In the modern world even the basics don't get an outing but are marginalised by bankrupt political tripe like Marxism, trumped by the perversities of Foucault and expelled from the corridors of academe by the insanity of deconstructionism.

Natural Law posits simply that, even when Man has not heard the Gospel or read the Bible, God has created him with the 'stuff' he needs to follow the 'good'. In short he is made in Imago Dei, the image of God.

He wants us to be like Him. He wants us to want good things. Creation is infused with Natural Law. The 'goods' we want are several.

Self-preservation is primary. We all have that unarguably. From that desire to save our own life we understand that life is sacred and that therefore other lives are sacred too. Hence we should not kill. Hence the Church's teaching on the sanctity of life.

We seek to reproduce – our instinct is good. In order to make the 'good' attractive God has made sex enjoyable. The rejection of reproduction has negative consequences – look around you.

We nurture our offspring - animals as well as humans.

This is an inalienable 'good' that needs no explanation.

And so on.....We naturally seek God because that is our primary relationship. Even the notable Existentialist atheist philosopher, Sartre, acknowledged that. He echoed Augustine when he said that 'there is a god-shaped hole in Man that longs to be filled' ('our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee'). Unfortunately for Sartre his atheism precluded the obvious remedy.

(For those wanting to read more on this there is an excellent Ph.D work by Fr. Stephen Wang on Aquinas and Sartre).

There are other key 'goods' – social, collaborative, educational – but the whole thing is founded in the infusing of creation with the mark of the creator. Natural Law is NOT the law of nature but a much higher doctrine of the relation of Man to his origin and his end. Not to believe this is an

option but never to have been told the underpinning philosophy of one's own civilisation is intellectual robbery.

The exile from the academies of this foundational truth – even from consideration – is the Golden Calf moment for our civilisation. The bearer of the Word of God comes down from the mountain to witness the debauch of fidelity, the rejection of divine sovereignty and the social consequences with which we now live.

For example, in what other universe would a country in the grip of a terrifying outbreak of mortality rush to push through, as a priority, extending legislation to condemn even more unborn children to state sponsored execution in the abattoirs of the abortion clinics.

Mad Cow Disease is back.