



HOMILY by Father Robbie Low

4th Sunday of Advent-Year B-December 20th 2020

***Readings: 2 Samuel 7: 1-5. 8-12. 14. 16, Psalm 88, Romans 16: 25-27,
Luke 1: 26-38***

If you asked an Aussie what he thought about the English, it wouldn't be too long, especially in sporting circles, before the caricature of the 'whingeing Pom' reared its ugly head.

Correspondingly if you were to invite an Englishman, in similar circumstances to sum up his Aussie co-belligerents' enduring characteristic, he would be almost certain to allude to his rivals' over assertive self-confidence and doubtful parenthood.

It's what makes a game of cricket such glorious fun.

If you went on to assert that most Aussies were 'mad', you would, of course, be overstepping the mark and falling foul of various humourless legal restraints. Nevertheless even a lifelong sporting 'tribalist' like me was brought up short by a small item on a slow news day in November. It said that, during the course of a lifetime, half of all Australians would need treatment for Mental Health issues. I could not believe that I had heard it correctly so rushed to check online – and there it was. And this is no scare story from the health pages of a tabloid. It's the detailed and hugely informed research of the Aussie Govt. body for Health & Welfare. Half the population. Already \$10 billion goes on the annual Mental

Health budget and almost 20% of Aussies are on some Mental Health related medication.

Australia was always the land people dreamed about. A new start. A new me. The lifestyle, the beach, the Barbie, the long hot summers, the prosperity. So, whatever happened to 'The Lucky Country'. How did it get so depressed?

Well the first thing to observe is that the Aussies may just be being a bit more honest than the rest of us. The truth is that most predominantly white Western liberal democratic states are facing mental health issues on a scale unimaginable in my youth. The Aussies are not backward in coming forward. Plus ca change.

The great AIMH report is forensic in its examination of the reality, the consequence, the current treatment regimes and the casualty rate.

What it does not do, unless its hidden in some obscure addendum, is attempt to seek the cause or causes of this life threatening, life crippling and life diminishing plague.

There is, however, a helpful link to a youth charity site which attempts to deal with some issues – and they are telling. The site claims its centres have ministered to 100,000 young people in a year, 15% of whom were suicidal. The issues they face – and they are too many to list them all – include bullying, phone sex and self publication of pornographic photos, bullying, gender identity crisis, parental separation, anger, social media pressure and abuse, trolling – being viciously attacked and alienated, drugs, alcohol, family conflict etc etc.

They don't feel secure. They don't feel loved. They are confused by the mixed messages that society gives. Even the well -meaning advice that bathes but does not heal the wounded is non-directional.

Only have sex if you are ready/in love/wear a condom.

Half of young Australians have phone sex apparently – only do it if you can trust the recipient.

Like artistic things and other boys? You may be homosexual. You may

even be in the wrong body. Try some powerful chemicals and self-mutilation.

In short, brothers and sisters, we are adrift – and our children and grandchildren with us – in the raging hurricane unleashed in the 1960s as a movement of liberation. It rejoiced in the name of the Permissive Society and its architects, like the deeply unattractive serial adulterer, Roy Jenkins, the Home Secretary who legalised abortion, homosexuality and no limits ‘entertainment’, lauded their triumphs as a great step forward for civilisation. Our children are now paying the bill. The cost in sickness, mental health, death of the innocent, destruction of marriage and security of home and family is beyond computation. The literal cost in health budgets, crime budgets, education budgets is beyond accounting.

Is anyone the happier for this great revolution?

According to consistent public surveys.....NO.

Is any Government going to take stock and argue from the facts that we have taken a wrong and potentially fatal step for our civilisation? Don't hold your breath. What is missing in all this well - meaning analysis and palliative care is the simple confession that we got it wrong. More than that.....The very Faith which we ditched to get to this bloody awful state is the heart of our civilisation's sanity. Because..... The Faith tells us that:-

- 1) Each one of us is unique. Each one made in the image of God.
Each one loved by God. Our life is sacred. We do not need to feel insecure. We do not need to be somebody else.
- 2) We are not just a random collections of molecules to be disposed of at the whim of a society demographically dying of self euthanasia and abortion. Each one is a person with inalienable rights – whatever Hitler or Roy Jenkins thought.

- 3) Sex is not just an activity, an entertainment, a gratification but a total self-offering to the other in the context of absolute love and fidelity – What we call Marriage.
- 4) The liberalising of divorce and the cheerful acceptance of serial promiscuity left a lifelong trail of damaged and insecure children. Many of them have coped heroically and triumphed but the wounds remain.
- 5) When I was at school bullying was dealt with by the cane. The mixture of pain and public humiliation always did the trick. I am not arguing for its return but this has been replaced by endless sanction free counselling alerting the bully to the self imposed impotence of the safeguarding authority or school.
- 6) We have an origin. God is our Father. We have a purpose – we are not witless wanderers in the empty deserts of space and time.
- 7) We are not vain and random collisions of matter and energy. We have a dignity given us by God and which, in His image in the other, we respect.
- 8) We are universal, from every nation under Heaven and one family. We march to a different drum.

In short the pursuit of this artificial notion of freedom has, far from liberating us, simply added new and weighty chains to the unsuspecting slaves of fashion. Today we heard the beginning of the Gospel of Liberation – the Truth. The values of the Faith are encapsulated in that simple and history changing story. The young woman of faith, pure and lovely, responds to the calling of God to be the portal of salvation, the doorway into immortality, eternity and divinity for the lost children of men. The Christian vision is far removed from the squalid, depressing, decadence of the last half century. It is a vision of the apotheosis of man – no less. To accept the alternative is, as Nietzsche ably demonstrated, the road to madness.

The Aussies may not be as mad as they think. They have spotted the scale of the problem that is facing our whole culture. Now perhaps they might like to search, with a little help, for the cause. If we don't rediscover it we will not be playing for a Victorian urn of burnt bails but for the ashes of our civilisation.

Wake up Lucky Country.