



HOMILY by Father Robbie Low

27th Sunday in Ordinary Time-Year B-October 3rd 2021

**Readings: Genesis 2: 18-24, Psalm 127, Hebrews 2: 9-11,
Mark 10: 2-16**

Genesis 2 v 18 – 24

‘Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh’

‘Quos Deus vult perdere, prius dementat’

As an epitaph for a civilisation, it takes some beating.

It first appears in a little-known Victorian work by the Revd William Scott Anderson. It translates, more familiarly as:

‘Those whom God would destroy He first makes mad.’

Long before Anderson, Procopius, in his account of the Vandal Wars, wrote: ‘Whenever God purposes that some adversity shall befall a man, he touches first his reason’.

This bleak prophetic prospect has loomed large over our civilizational home almost since our fathers crawled, exhausted, over the finishing line in a terrifying and bloody war against a consuming tyranny and demonic inhumanity some three quarters of a century ago.

Scarcely a week passes now without some outrageous reminder of the engulfing madness that seems to consume the governance and powerful corporations of our civilisation.

Last week, and not for the first time, it was the turn of the Leader of the Opposition. As one of his MPs had been intimidated out of attending the Party Conference for her historical and biologically unarguable views on the physical identity of a woman, Sir Keir was asked, not unreasonably in the circumstances, if he thought having a cervix was a qualification for being a woman. He replied: **‘It is something that shouldn't be said. It is not right.’** It is a mystery to most why a plain biological fact should require censorship or, clearly fearing the political consequences of stating what my late father-in-law would have called ‘the bleeding obvious’, a sane man should deny the truth.

The reality is, of course, less amusing and much more sinister and Sir Keir is far from alone in the corridors of power in his embrace of the mind-rotting nonsense that stifles honest and intelligent debate on the constitutional integrity of humanity. The course of our lifetimes has watched a descent into corporate and political insanity focussing on the identity of Man. Who or what we are has become the central debate of our time. The wholesale collapse of any religious understanding has removed the undergirding purpose or cohesion that used to inform our common life. Nowhere more so than in the identity of family, sexual aberration, gender confusion and the recognition of the self.

On the immediate issue of cervical identity, the BBC, with its penchant for half truth, rushed to Sir Keir’s aid. Some men do have a cervix, it claimed. This is true only if you forget to mention these are, in fact, women who have ‘transgendered’.

It was the flip side of the debate a while ago where the mayor and police force of a major city took time and trouble to investigate the supposed ‘hate crime’ of a feminist group which put up stickers that said. ‘Women don’t have willies.’ My experience is limited here but both my wife and my doctor friends assure me this is true.

Historically of course, gender dysphoria is rare. I have encountered three genuine cases in 40 years ministry. One physical ambiguity was resolved surgically at birth, the other two were mental health issues. This indeed was the previous diagnosis of any such presentation. As a doctor pal explained: 'If a man comes to me telling me that he has an overwhelming desire to amputate his leg, I refer him to a psychiatrist. If he comes to me and tells me he wants his genitalia removed, I have to put him on dangerous drugs and prepare him for surgical mutilation.'

This is but the tip of the iceberg of the identity crisis of a post-Faith society.

Who man is and what his purpose is has been deliberately obscured by the descent into fashionable atheism and the triumph of materialism. It owes much to the medieval heresy of Nominalism which pretended that there were no universals and that, ad absurdum, a thing is what it is because I call it that. This removes any common understanding or objective truth. It does not take a genius to see how this nonsense, duly enthroned, leads initially to chaos and, subsequently and necessarily, to tyranny to impose the lie at its heart. The man who thought he was Napoleon was used, for his own safety, to be escorted to a secure unit. Today, I can self-identify as Dorothy on a Friday afternoon and go into the girls changing room at my granddaughter's school and, by the same token presumably, declare myself to be President of the USA on Monday morning and expect access to the nuclear code. That is the new logic of a dis-integrated and dysfunctional society.

Today's readings from Holy Scripture are pretty clear.

The origin of Man in creation is a divine intention.

Man is made in the image of God – with all the stupendous consequences that has for our 'pro-creation' – our participation in the divine work.

Man and woman are equally made in the divine image- their common origin, physical similarities and profound but complementary differences

are an immutable given. Their value is irreducibly equal but they are not interchangeable.

This, at once, rejects the idiocies of Nominalism, the tyranny of Talibanism and the monstrous mutilations of the current laws on medical practice. As the Church, we sometimes hesitate to speak for fear of upsetting people and we mistake our silence for ‘charity’. It is not compassionate thus to confirm people in error. Qui tacet consentire – who remain silent gives consent. It is never an act of love to collude with destructive philosophies. We should be walking lovingly with the confused but not confused ourselves. We should not mistake our timidity for reverent caution thereby leaving our grandchildren both to endure and to clean up our mess. People’s lives, identities and spiritual destiny are at stake. They need to know that they are loved and made in the image of God. They are not for disfiguring nor for the demolition of their identity. It is a triumph of the devil that those who seek to defend human life, the sacredness of the person and the eternal worth of that creation that is Man, should, in this topsy-turvy world, be caricatured as the ‘haters’ while the agents of destruction posture as the friends of the disorientated and alienated. Six centuries before Christ, Sophocles wrote:

‘Evil appears as good in the minds of those whom God leads to destruction.’ Those whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad.

It is the vocation of the Church to remain an oasis of sanity and charity and hope in the midst of demonic chaos, confusion and self-hatred.

In an age of gathering darkness we are called to be witnesses to the Eternal Light, the Lux Mundi – the true destiny of Man.