

Easter 6B

Malcolm Muggeridge and a TV crew were making a documentary on Mother Teresa. They wanted to film her and her sisters in the actual place where they worked with the dying. But they had a problem. It was quite dark and there was insufficient light for filming. They had no proper artificial light either but they decided to proceed anyhow, despite the fading light. To their surprise the film turned out beautiful and the light was just perfect. It was a sort of mysterious warm glow that was surprisingly bright. Muggeridge, who was not a Christian at the time, was absolutely convinced that the light came from the love emanating from Mother Teresa and her co-workers in that home.

Remember the story in the gospel when Mary Magdalene anointed the feet of Jesus with very expensive ointment in the house of Simon the Pharisee, to his obvious displeasure. The scriptures tell us that 'the whole room was filled with the scent of the perfume'. If we love Jesus like Mary did, the fragrance of our love will circulate widely as well. One of the prayers of Bl John Newman was: 'Dear Jesus, help me to spread your fragrance everywhere I go. Flood my soul with your spirit and light'.

The love of God brings light and warmth into every situation if we want it. Just like the Sun's rays warm the earth so the light of God's love will warm our stony hearts, if we let it. We can always shield ourselves from the Sun and live in a house where the drapes are drawn. Instead of receding into the darkness, Jesus wants us always to 'bask in the light of his love' and not allow the Powers of Darkness to deceive us into thinking that God doesn't care about us or that His love is an illusion. When St Therese was dying she heard a mocking voice which insisted that God had deserted her and there was no afterlife.

The only way we remain in the light of His love is by obeying his Word but He does not withdraw his love from us even when we behave in an unloving way, just like the Sun does not cease to shine when the sky becomes overcast. We may distance ourselves from God but He doesn't withdraw His love from us.

To prove his love Jesus laid down his life for us, his friends. It is only with a close friend we can share our inmost heart. Staying in the sunshine of his love is another way of saying that we hide nothing from Him. Prayer is a heart to heart talk with God.

What did Adam and Eve do when they sinned? They hid from God among the trees of the Garden of Eden because they couldn't face Him after they sinned. When people say they don't believe in God, it may just be they can't face God, because they have elected to stay in the dark. It was easier to deaden the voice of God coming through their conscience than to come out into the light.

The Sun sometimes disappears behind the clouds. It may sometimes appear that Jesus has lost interest in us and is not responding to our prayers like when he ignored the Canaanite woman's request in the gospel. But she wouldn't leave him alone until she got what she wanted. He'll answer our prayers as well if we keep his commandments, the most important of which is to love one another. Then our prayers will not go unanswered.