

# Reflection

... A message to Believers CARRY ON HALLUCINATING.....For most of the time priests who are properly inserted into their vocation are happy people, like all walks of life, you only get out of something what you are willing to put in, exactly the same applies to parenthood, marriage, teaching, nursing etc.... ; Then occasionally something really uplifting comes along ; so I must tell you about it.

It happened last Sunday at the 12 noon mass here at st.Bridgets's, Twickenham road (..24<sup>th</sup> January '21..) ; as you know the obligation to attend Sunday mass was suspended in March of last year due to the outbreak of the corona virus ; since then we've had two lockdowns, all places of worship were closed. Presently the obligation to attend Sunday mass is still suspended until further notice, though places of worship may remain open. Before the 12 noon mass last Sunday, snow began to rapidly fall, I was wondering how many would show up for mass in very cold circumstances, I was pleasantly surprized. About fifty people assisted, and I said to myself "I'd be more than happy to celebrate the mass with and for these wonderful people"

Says you "...and why so happy??, isn't it your job as a priest to say mass for the people?" well, of course it is but this was different, at least that's how I personally perceived it ; they came even though the Sunday obligation had been suspended, they came in the midst of a worsening pandemic, and they came in freezing weather walking thru' the snow ; I said to myself "their Faith must mean so much to them, what an inspiration!" ; perhaps bystanders would look on and say "oh! How silly they are, going to all that trouble to get to their place of worship when they could have remained in their warm homes and not to have bothered?" Yes! many may observe and make their comments, but the rock solid Faith of certain people has to be admired. Others may look on with a type of envy and comment "Oh!, if only I had just a fraction of the Faith that these believers have..." ..... "Oh if only !!!!!!!", a common cliché of our times, indeed all times!

If only Jesus Our Saviour had delivered an “easier” Gospel!, “..an easier WHAT?” WHY did he say such things as **IF THE WORLD HATES YOU, REMEMBER THAT IT HATED ME BEFORE YOU ; IF YOU BELONGED TO THE WORLD, THE WORLD WOULD LOVE YOU AS ITS OWN** or **IN THE WORLD YOU WILL HAVE TROUBLE, BUT BE BRAVE, I HAVE CONQUERED THE WORLD** ....seemingly it would be easier for all of us to ignore the message of the Saviour and to simply “ride-along-with-worldliness”, we may choose to do so. And yet there are real believers out there with real exemplary Faith, little by little we SEE who they are by their actions, by their inner peace, by their “something special about them”, by their non-worldliness and a lot more.

Here’s another short occurrence to think about! A while back the renowned evolutionary physicist Richard Dawkins presented to a large group his evolutionary theories on how the universe came to be, followed by the usual discussion, questions, comments and answers. Mr.Dawkins has a habit of discarding religion and Faith as nonsensical, they make no sense to him and he has no problem in letting that be known ; On this particular occasion, a member of the audience stood up and asked mr.Dawkins about the existence of the Creator of the universe, presenting briefly and very sincerely his own deep faith in Jesus the Saviour, to which Dawkins replied “you are HALLUCINATING”, the audience applauded the physicist for his sneery answer to the brief testimony of the man who had expressed his Faith in the Saviour, not very edifying to view!

Our Lord was brutally honest, he stated **HAPPY ARE YOU WHEN PEOPLE ABUSE YOU and PERSECUTE YOU and SPEAK ALL KINDS OF CALUMNY AGAINST YOU ON MY ACCOUNT. REJOICE AND BE GLAD FOR YOUR REWARD WILL BE GREAT IN HEAVEN.....**

Seemingly it takes a lot of renouncing the world in order to reach Heaven ; We, believers in the Saviour, may also have to renounce how the world sees us! because of our love of the Saviour the world may see us as “hallucinators”, not fitting-in with the usual vast superficiality all around us, disinterested in self-importance, apartness from the latest mod-con-technology, indifference to what the neighbours think of us, never ending up in a state of hopelessness, always clinging to the Faith in the best and worst of times, enjoying an inner peace the world cannot give, standing firm in Faith in the midst of serious difficulties and never doubting the guidance of the Holy Spirit. THIS IS THE WAY TO HEAVEN, and thankfully many have chosen to go there with their precious Faith to lead them on, there’s no worldly explanation for this, they have chosen the Saviour as their Loved One ; so who are these people who freely show up on a freezing cold Sunday morning to worship God with a threatening virus close by? are they hallucinating? are they out-of-step with all that the world has on offer?, are they at peace and live in hope for the glory that is to be? so if you want to reach Heaven **CARRY ON “HALLUCINATING”, THE LORD IS WITH YOU...** your “hallucination” some day will become an Eternal Reality.

.....STAY HEALTHY.....BE WELL.....PRAY FOR THE HOMELESS and for those whose hearts are broken.

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