



HOMILY by Father Robbie Low

1st Sunday of Lent Year B

The sign of the rainbow

Readings: *Genesis 9: 8-15, Ps 24, 1 Peter 3: 13-22, Mark 1: 12-15*

A very dear friend of mine is in the building trade and married with four children. A couple of years ago he bought himself a rainbow tie which he thought might brighten up some of the duller lunchtime business meetings. Several outings into the life of this exuberant necktie a colleague friend took him on one side and asked him if he was making a statement. To his astonishment it was gently explained to him that he had inadvertently purchased and severally modelled the 'Gay Pride' tie. The tie has been retired.

What struck me about this story is how quickly our cultural references shift in a frenetic and disorientated culture and how completely the conspiracy of lobby groups and media have undermined fundamental self-understandings.

To my generation (and the three thousand years of Judeo-Christian experience that preceded us) the rainbow was directly linked to this morning's Biblical story. Long after we knew that there was no pot of gold

at the rainbow's end (otherwise Bodmin would be a town packed with millionaires) and that the breaking of light into its constituent parts was achieved by refraction in water, its symbolism was of the fundamental covenant of God with Man in the wake of judgement and cataclysm. The story of Noah is steeped in the symbolism of salvation.

The great epic of the Flood story is predicated upon the judgement of God. The Sacred Scripture tells us simply that, *'The Lord saw that the wickedness of Man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.'*

In consequence of the spiralling corruption and degradation of Fallen Man the Scripture goes on to say that *'The Lord was sorry that He had made Man. It grieved His heart'* and He would remove this sin sick creature from the face of the earth. Noah alone, with his family, finds favour with God and he is instructed to build the Ark, the sole sanctuary of salvation in the pending doom. It must have seemed an absurd task to his contemporaries, at least until the rain came.

At the end of the judgement Man begins anew. The landing of the ark, the sign of the dove, the re-establishment of the altar of worship to God are concluded with the rainbow sign. The Covenant of God with Man is that there will be no more cataclysm by global inundation. But Man must keep his part of the pledge.

To our children and grandchildren the rainbow sign of God's covenant with Man is the sign of mercy. But this long history of salvation, has now been hijacked as a sign of what is charmingly called 'diversity'. This, we know, is

just a code for sexual pluralism or, put more starkly, behaviour plain contrary to Biblical teaching.

For most of my lifetime the natural family has been under attack. The cultural meltdown of the 1960s saw the radical disassociation of sexual intimacy and intercourse from its natural place within the marriage covenant. The contraceptive revolution of the 1970s witnessed the permanent detachment of procreation from its necessary prerequisite, sexual relations within that loving and trusting reality.

The following decades saw the holocaust of the innocent where the much vaunted contraception had failed its gravely misled devotees. Alongside this burgeoning chaos the lobby for diversity grew. If sex was to be detached from its covenantal and procreative purpose who was to say any form of sexual practice was wrong.

Now legalised in the white heat of the permissive sixties, the homosexual lobby found its increasingly strident voice. This has grown into an all out assault on the biological, sociological, anthropological and theological understanding of the identity of Man.

Without even the pretence of democratic consultation, the Cameron government traduced the fundamental understanding of marriage as between one man and one woman. Last week a Labour MP equated those who held a Christian view of marriage with slave traders while the BBC lined up to pillory traditional beliefs as a sign of political extremism alongside holocaust denial.

More attacks are building wave upon wave. The transgender lobby is demanding not only the right to self definition but the legally binding right to enforce it on you. You will have men in the ladies changing room if they assert their 'womanhood' and, if the current legislation in Canada catches on, you will have no right to dissent. Calling a man who thinks he is a woman 'HE' will be a criminal offence. What was once a rare genuine biological anomaly of gender dysphoria is now replaced by an ever growing lifestyle choice to undermine the nature of man in a massive identity crisis. There is much more that a mere Sunday morning homily cannot encompass. Wherever we look there is grave disorder that threatens our culture, our family and the practice of our Faith. What we need to know is how, as followers of Christ, we should respond to the crisis and the millions of individual lives that are being derailed by the Satanic deceit.

Our first task is to be clear that we wish no-one harm. Indeed the mainspring of our concern is love for the misguided and the disorientated and misled. Mother Church seeks the salvation of all her children – that is why Christ died. It is important that we continue to speak the truth in charity. It is abundantly clear that, after sixty years of the Sexual Revolution, Man is not happier for his disobedience.

In matters of behaviour, the Church talks of immoral acts as intrinsically disordered because they breach natural law. We cannot say any less and be faithful to our remit to seek the best for the other. We must, as our Holy Father says, be a field hospital for the wounded of our culture wars who seek healing.

We cannot remain silent while our elected representatives (often approved and pre-selected by the metropolitan elites of the parties) promote an agenda that is damaging to our children and grandchildren. Political engagement is a duty.

Most important of all, like Noah, we must keep building up the Ark of Salvation, which is the Church of God, against the Day of Judgement. We live in a civilisation which has a demographic and cultural death wish. We stand for the culture of life and the integrity and dignity of Man. We may not be recognised or thanked for it.....until the rain begins.

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