

## READ REFLECT REVIEW

### SESSION 5

### LETTERS, ENCYCLICALS AND LIVES OF SAINTS SAINTS WHOSE CARE FOR CREATION STILL INSPIRES US TODAY

#### READ

IN SEPTEMBER 2020, JONATHAN BRADEN, CONTENT MANAGER AT LAUDATO SI' MOVEMENT, MADE THE FOLLOWING COMMENT:

*THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS MADE CARING FOR CREATION A KEY TENET OF THE FAITH FOR CENTURIES, LONG BEFORE POPE FRANCIS WROTE LAUDATO SI' AND PLACED THAT MILLENNIA OF CATHOLIC TEACHING IN THE CONTEXT OF TODAY'S ECOLOGICAL CRISIS. AS WE WORK TO URGENTLY CARE FOR GOD'S CREATION, MAY WE ALL FIND FURTHER INSPIRATION FROM THESE SAINTS WHOSE PASSION AND LOVE FOR GOD'S CREATION CAN STILL MOTIVATE US TO ACT TODAY.*

**ST. AUGUSTINE, 354-430** FEAST DAY: 28 AUGUST

FOR AUGUSTINE THE IDEAL WOULD BE TO SEE NATURE AS GOD SEES IT, FEELING DEEPLY BOTH ITS BEAUTY AND ITS IMPERMANENCE, LOVING NATURE WITHOUT CLINGING TO IT, WITH SUCH CLEAR SEEING WOULD COME LOVE AND THE MOTIVATION FOR SUSTAINED AND SKILFUL ACTION.

**ST. THERESE OF LISIEUX, 1873-1897** FEAST DAY: 1 OCTOBER

ALTHOUGH SHE WAS ONLY 24 WHEN SHE DIED, ST. THERESE LEFT BEHIND MANY WRITINGS, INSTRUCTIONS ALMOST, ON HOW TO ADMIRE AND BE IN AWE OF CREATION. ONE QUOTE FROM HER WRITINGS :

“THE SUN’S LIGHT THAT PLAYS ON THE CEDAR TREES, PLAYS ON EACH TINY FLOWER AS IF IT WERE THE ONLY ONE IN EXISTENCE; AND IN THE SAME WAY OUR LORD TAKES A SPECIAL INTEREST IN EACH SOUL.”

**ST. BENEDICT, 480-547** FEAST DAY: 11 JUL

ST. BENEDICT, THE FATHER OF WESTERN MONASTICISM, HAS SEEN HIS LOVE FOR CREATION SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE WORLD SINCE HIS DEATH MORE THAN 1,400 YEARS AGO. ONE OF THE VOWS FOR BENEDICTINES IS “STABILITAS,” THE IDEA THAT ONE SHOULD BE GROUNDED IN A COMMUNITY AND PLACE AND ESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP OF CARE AND CONNECTION TO THAT PLACE.

FATHER ABBOT JOHN KLASSEN, OSB, WRITES, “BY COMING TO KNOW A PLACE DEEPLY . MONASTIC COMMUNITIES WILL MAKE DECISIONS WITH AN UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR CONSEQUENCES.”

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI, 1181-1226** FEAST DAY: 4 OCTOBER

WHERE TO BEGIN WITH ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI, THE PATRON SAINT OF ECOLOGY? PERHAPS POPE FRANCIS DESCRIBES HIS SPIRIT-FILLED TIME ON EARTH BEST:

“HE WAS A MYSTIC AND A PILGRIM WHO LIVED IN SIMPLICITY AND IN WONDERFUL HARMONY WITH GOD, WITH OTHERS, WITH NATURE AND WITH HIMSELF. HE SHOWS US JUST HOW INSEPARABLE THE BOND IS BETWEEN CONCERN FOR NATURE, JUSTICE FOR THE POOR, COMMITMENT TO SOCIETY, AND INTERIOR PEACE.” (LS 10)

**ST. KEVIN OF GLENDALOUGH, 498 ? -618** FEAST DAY: 3 JULY

ST. KEVIN WAS THE MODEL OF SIMPLICITY

HE ALSO BECAME FRIENDS WITH ALL CREATURES, MUCH LIKE ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI WOULD DO 700 YEARS LATER.

**ST. JOHN PAUL II, 1920-2005** FEAST DAY: 22 OCTOBER

ST. JOHN PAUL II COMPELLED CATHOLICS TO CARE FOR CREATION AND TO UNDERGO AN “ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION” THROUGHOUT HIS 27-YEAR PAPACY. FOR HIM, IT WAS PERSONAL. HE OFTEN MADE TIME FOR CREATION, HIKING AND SKIING IN HIS NATIVE POLAND AND ELSEWHERE. SPEAKING IN 2001, HE SAID:

*“IF WE SCAN THE REGIONS OF OUR PLANET, WE IMMEDIATELY SEE THAT HUMANITY HAS DISAPPOINTED GOD’S EXPECTATIONS. WE MUST THEREFORE ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT THE ‘ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION’ WHICH IN RECENT DECADES HAS MADE HUMANITY MORE SENSITIVE TO THE CATASTROPHE TO WHICH IT HAS BEEN HEADING.”*

**ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS, 1542-1591** FEAST DAY: 14 DECEMBER

SO MEANINGFUL WERE THE LIFE, ACTIONS, AND WRITINGS OF ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS THAT POPE FRANCIS DEDICATED A SECTION OF LAUDATO SI’ TO THE SPANIARD:

*“STANDING AWESTRUCK BEFORE A MOUNTAIN, HE OR SHE CANNOT SEPARATE THIS EXPERIENCE FROM GOD, AND PERCEIVES THAT THE INTERIOR AWE BEING LIVED MUST BE ENTRUSTED TO THE LORD: ‘MOUNTAINS HAVE HEIGHTS, AND THEY ARE PLENTIFUL, VAST, BEAUTIFUL, GRACEFUL, BRIGHT, AND FRAGRANT. THESE MOUNTAINS ARE WHAT MY BELOVED IS TO ME. LONELY VALLEYS ARE QUIET, PLEASANT, COOL, SHADY, AND FLOWING WITH FRESH WATER; IN THE VARIETY OF THEIR GROVES AND IN THE SWEET SONG OF THE BIRDS, THEY AFFORD ABUNDANT RECREATION AND DELIGHT TO THE SENSES, AND IN THEIR SOLITUDE AND SILENCE, THEY REFRESH US AND GIVE REST. THESE VALLEYS ARE WHAT MY BELOVED IS TO ME.’”*

**REFLECT** WHO IS MY FAVOURITE SAINT?

WHICH OF THESE SAINTS MOST IMPRESSES ME AS BEING A MODEL FOR LIFE AS A KNIGHT IN 2023?

**REVIEW** REFLECTING BACK TO 1 CORINTHIANS AND THE CALL TO BE SAINTS, HAVE I “GOT THE MESSAGE” THAT SAINTS ARE PEOPLE OF ACTION IN PRAYER AND GOOD WORKS. HAS REFRESHING MY MEMORIES OF THESE SAINTS IN SESSION 5 RAISED AWARENESS OF HOW I MIGHT ‘RAISE THE BAR’ IN MY ATTITUDE AND ACTION? DISCUSS WITH OTHER KNIGHTS