

## **Homily 22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the Year – 29<sup>th</sup> August 2021**

I remember going down into a clay mine near Boness 25 years ago or so, down at the bottom of the mineshaft, the guide briefly switched off all the lights – Then suddenly there was total darkness – you couldn't even see your hand in front of your face. – TOTAL DARKNESS FILLS US WITH FEAR – UNCERTAINTY.

On St Augustine's Feast is today, he talks in his confessions, of being brought to Spiritual light or enlightenment; that instead of someone switching off the light of conversion to a repentant sinner – with God there is no darkness. The problem or challenge, or should I just say challenge, because challenges can be fixed, problems are the stuff of defeatists, the challenge for today is that many unbelieving folks are stuck down the mineshaft of life in complete Spiritual darkness. Finding the light of Christ, as St Augustine powerfully puts it, is like coming home to the light of eternal truth, He writes in his Confessions "I entered into my own depths with you as guide; and I was able to do it because you were my helper I entered, and with the eye of my soul, such as it was, I saw your unchangeable light shining over that same eye of my soul, over my mind".

It's that mindfulness of God that captures the spirit of St James in the Second Reading where he writes about the 'Father of all light, with him there is no shadow of change'. You, see with us, I mean humanity, there is always the risk of change, - that so called 'angels' can become demons; that those who look up to, aren't what they seem; or the ravages of time, materialism and ambition turn us into a pale shadow of our former selves; this is even before we think of the effects of indulgence in food, drink and over consumption – describing those in a low ebb – as in a "Dark Place".

With the benefit of science and technology we can now have exploratory examinations that send a camera into our stomach or our liver. We can see through C.T scans, C.A.T scans, and x-rays, what is going on inside our physical bodies. You call them the 'mineshafts' of physiology. Jesus takes it further, exploring the darkest recesses of our motivations, our thought process, our intellect, our reasoning, our conscience and attitudes, our morality or lack of it – encouraging us to change for the better – come into the light.

The places we should concern ourselves with, are, in the light of hypocrisy, where we don't allow any light to shine, what we have chosen to remain in the

dark... our guilt, our shame, our pride that paralyses a willingness to repent and come true, our grudges....

As Jesus says, our worship of God has only got any worth if I allow myself to be redeemed by faith. If the corrupt and dishonest mind remains hidden and uncovered, then the healing and reconciliation can never begin to take place.

St Augustine lamented that it had taken him till he was 33 years old to truly connect to God's ways and be honest about his dark and disordered past. – to come into the Divine light.

What did it for him, was embracing Jesus Christ – switching on the light of true faith in God. – So that all begins to make sense by desire, coun, presentation and resolution.

(Song of Simeon)

To finish with his own fantastic words in 400 A.D –

“Late have I loved you, O Beauty so ancient and so new; Late have I loved you! For Behold you were within me, and I, outside; and I sought you outside and, in my ugliness, fell upon those lonely things that you have made, “You were with me and I was not with you”.

God Bless you All,

Fr Jeremy C Bath