Twenty-sixth Sunday of the Year C 2022

That marvellous line again: ‘The sprawlers’ revelry is over!’ One of my favourite lines in scripture. Though I shouldn’t feel too happy about it - it could be a comment on me and on so many of us. There is a definite feeling in the air that there are hard times ahead. Sprawling is not going to be an option. Wrapping up warm; discovering how to eat more cheaply and praying for peace are going to occupy much of our time instead. We also should be aware that as well as more short term challenges there is the greater challenge of the state of our planet and our climate. The Pakistani authorities were right to point out that they have contributed very little in carbon emissions; unlike Western industrialised countries - yet they have have suffered catastrophically from the effects of climate change. Pope Frances spoke of this ten years ago in his encyclical Laudato Si - it is the poorest in the world who are already suffering the most.

One way to think about Original Sin is to compare it to gravity. We find it difficult to be truly unselfish - what we and those closest to us want dominates over everything else - it is like a gravitational field that is difficult to break free of. We try and sometimes succeed and often fail. On a larger scale this is why dealing with climate change will be very challenging - because it demands that we change our behaviour; have to do things that are inconvenient - and we hate that.

Jesus came to free us from the effects of Original Sin - to help break the gravitational pull of our selfishness with his utterly unselfish sacrifice; his self-giving which, through the action of the Holy Spirit we make active as we gather for mass and bring to mind what he has done - and is still doing.

Some of our young people are to be confirmed on Tuesday They will sacramentally receive the Holy Spirit. This reminds us to place our hope in that Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. If we feel shy about our duty to God and our world we have the Holy Spirit to help us. Let us pray for our young people who are to be confirmed; let us pray for ourselves - that the Holy Spirit can work through our words, our actions and our lives. So that when we, like the Rich Man we come to judgement we will be received into the comfort and joy of Heaven and not hear God’s words of condemnation for all eternity.