

St Francis Day Meditation Oct 3rd 2021 B Psalm 148, Col 1:15-20, Matt 6:25-34 **Scott MALCOLM**

Facebook. I have an account, but I use it very infrequently. But during the week someone posted an old song which turned up on my page. John Lennon of Beatles fame, singing Imagine, his hopeful classic about peace and love.

On the other hand, one of the routines that has made this lockdown bearable has been the reading the paper, and during the week, there was an article about Greta Thunberg of Climate Change fame, having a go at New Zealand based on her impression that we were one of the worst climate polluters in all the world.

John Lennon, famous in the 1960's and 70's for being a Beatle, love ins with Yoko Ono and the promotion of love and peace, Greta Thunberg, this generations primo activist, obviously her passion is climate change, or care of creation. Both people who encapsulate moments for their generations. Famous, outspoken, and held up as shining examples to the youth of their day about the possibility of human potential and change.

Both, you might argue, their generations ... version of St Francis of Assisi?

Albeit without the vows of chastity and poverty, certainly for John Lennon.

St Francis was born into a wealthy family, but upon his encounter with the Lord Jesus gave up all his worldly possessions, the hope of a wife and family, embraced poverty and tried to live a gospel life. In the process he laid the foundations for a world order, the Franciscans, who would do the same. Who would live by his wise rule and follow his example!

If there is one figure in Christian history who is a lightning rod for John Lennon's spread of love and peace, and Greta Thunberg's concern for climate change and care of creation, it must be St Francis.

He is surely a Saint for our time.

Nearly 800 years later, on the 3rd October 2021 in Auckland NZ, we remember him. His life, his teachings, his order, his rule, his wisdom, but most of all today, his love for God's creation. The Earth, Sun and Moon, the fellow creatures who live in and on and above this planet.

As we remember him, I wonder what he would say to us, the ordinary people of the world, as well as those who fill the public consciousness, the public space. Who fill the newspapers, the airwaves, the social media platforms ...

What would St Francis have to say to us, and to John Lennon and Greta Thunberg, whose hopes of love and peace and an end to climate change have been the stand out messages of the last 50 years?

What would St Francis say to all of us ...

perhaps it might be something along the lines of ...

"Lord, make us instruments of your peace"

Where there is hate, may we sow love.

...

Thanks be to God. Amen.