



Fr Kevin Bates' Reflection:

This Fragile Globe

A huge explosion rocks Lebanon's capital Beirut this week and life is abruptly ended for a large number of people and profoundly damaged for thousands more. On top of a terrible economy and the coronavirus, the people of Lebanon are facing first-hand the reality of life's fragility.

Victoria is coming up with more than 700 new cases of Covid-19 infection this morning as the whole State is subjected to control measures not seen before.

The rest of us are on high alert not knowing where and when the virus will impact in our neighbourhood.

Scientists are scrambling to find a vaccine that may help us through this crisis and the outcome of their research still seems uncertain.

So much that once seemed stable and predictable has been replaced by a climate of uncertainty. Planning for future events is problematical and dreams of recovering what was once "normal" are fading fast.

Along with this, the global environment is increasingly at risk with many species of plant and animal life facing extinction. The world's forests and oceans are showing signs of wear and tear and the flourishing life they once produced is rapidly diminishing.

It's clear that our fragile mother earth is in need of help, the natural world and the human community.

There are many dedicated people with both the vision and expertise who are attending to the necessary healing and recovery processes. Many of us are increasingly aware of the crises that face us and feel somewhat overwhelmed and powerless in the face of them.

Others again go about their daily lives seemingly without a care in the world, consuming happily away, partying on, making sure that their own rights and needs are attended to and hang the expense.

Those whose world is centred on their own personal rights also manage to trivialise or deny the state of our world Others of us who feel the uncertainty that is shaping our global community, can feel isolated and lack the confidence to take any action that might repair and heal. We can then retreat into inaction and perhaps hope that someone else might come up with a solution to all that ails us.

The fact is that none of us is immune from the way the world is turning at the moment, and none of us is exempt from the responsibility to play a role in its rehabilitation.

Pope Francis in his Letter "Laudato Si", which he addressed to the whole world, speaks of the interdependence of every creature. Despite whatever grand illusions we may entertain, we all depend on each other and on the natural environment. Here are his words:

Hence we need to grasp the variety of things in their multiple relationships.^[62] We understand better the importance and meaning of each creature if we contemplate it within the entirety of God's plan. As the Catechism teaches: "God wills the interdependence of creatures. The sun and the moon, the cedar and the little flower, the eagle and the sparrow: the spectacle of their countless diversities and inequalities tells us that no creature is self-sufficient. Creatures exist only in dependence on each other, to complete each other, in the service of each other".^[63]

In this season of uncertainty one thing is certain and that is that we have choices we can make that can enable healing, refresh hope and reclaim good order.

It's high time that we dispense with the myth that we are self-sufficient, that we can consume away to our heart's content and that the rest of the world can look after itself without our involvement.

If we allow God's perspective to become our own, where concern for each other and for the world around us holds sway, then the shape of each of our days may well take on a fresh and hopeful hue.

When my little self makes way for our global self, we may well become that light for the world that Jesus said we could be.

Father Kevin