

Sermon preached by Rt Rev'd Kevin Pearson, Bishop of Argyll & The Isles  
at the Diocesan Synod Eucharist March, 2013

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

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The gospel according to Luke: Peter said to Jesus

“Tis good Lord to be here”

“Tis good Lord to be here”

Tis good Lord to be here because here we meet with God.

In this place, this evening, in this company, we, you and me, we meet with God.

God Almighty, God above us became human, like you and me, in Jesus Christ he shows God is with us and through the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit of risk, God is in us.

In this place, this evening, in this company we meet with God, who in Jesus Christ promised in bread and wine promised to be with us. That is the reality of God's life and love, we celebrate in this sacrament of Holy Communion, in this place, this evening, in this company, we, you and me, we meet with God – now, in this present moment, because this present moment is all we truly possess.

As famous people have said , “ the past is a foreign country – they do things differently there,” we are always in danger of hurrying on to a receding future and so we have the experience but miss the meaning. Now, this present moment is all we truly possess, now we meet with God in this sacrament of bread and wine. Now we meet with God in this present moment because what is a sacrament a sacrament is the outward and visible sign of God's inward and spiritual grace now, now we encounter meet with God, in this sacrament of the present moment.

The sacrament, of the present moment is all we truly possess and yet in this present moment we meet with God. In the sacrament of the present moment we possess, but more than that, much more than that, we are possessed, held, we meet with God.

That wonderful dream of Jacob, his vision of the ladder to heaven, the heaven of understanding, acceptance, real peace makes this moment sacramental - we possess, we meet with God, but more than that, much more than that, God seeks us now in this present moment. We possess and are possessed, held, as someone famous once said in recognising the vision we turn aside “to a brightness that seemed as transitory as your youth once, but is the eternity that awaits you. We possess and are possessed, held, by God in this present moment.

It is the sacrament of the present moment that we have to share, it is the sacrament of the present moment that makes “mission” not a word that frightens us but in the sacrament of the

present moment mission, enables, facilitates, gives us the chance to share the excitement of being with God. And the sacrament of the present moment opens us up to people, to ideas, to ways of doing things, to questions that might frighten us, to use the weariness that would hold us down, to face the loneliness which might isolate us, cuts us off from other people and from God. God who seeks to be with us, with you and with me, now in this sacrament of the present moment.

And its hard to be with God, where is rest and peace, that wonderful image of Jesus in the letter to the Phillipians, the epistle for Palm Sunday. Jesus emptied himself. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus emptied himself in the one question: “ Father is there another way” – the journey through the wilderness of doubt, confusion, questions, questions, questions but Jesus showed, God understands what’s its like to be you and what its like to be me – now, in this present moment, there are those here and now who are happy on the mount of transfiguration, there are those in the depression of Gethsemane, God is with us, in this company, we, you and me, we meet with God in this sacrament of the present moment because the past is a foreign country and the receding future proves now, is the moment we possess and are possessed by God.

And the sacrament of the present moment means we can face the devil of fear in the questions which show the wilderness we know within our hearts. We can face the devil of fear, we experience within, when we consider gay marriage, ecological literally melt-down, financial crisis. Now – the sacrament of the present moment what would Jesus say. The Bible has more to say about money than he has to say about sexuality, the mark of the Holy Spirit in the creation of the book of Genesis. The mark of the Holy Spirit is turbulence, chaos, questions even on the mount of Transfiguration the disciples didn’t quite know, grasp, understand but still they could say “Tis good Lord to be here”.

It is good to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, now, in this present moment because we know the sacrament, the grace peace of the present moment here, now. To be a disciple is to know we are a work in progress.

That is why, as we install the new Dean, we pray that he may be faithful to the gospel, to the sacramental life of our Church, we pray for Dean Andrew to be a faithful disciple among faithful disciples now, the sacrament of the present moment is known, in this place, in this company, in this Diocese God is with us.

Not always in ways, people, ideas, we understand, let alone control but the Holy Spirit of God is known in the turbulence which is creative, the turbulence of Pentecost, the turbulence we know, see, feel, in this present time. God is with us in this sacrament of the present moment.

Amen.

+Kevin

Argyll and The Isles

Diocesan Synod Eucharist 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2013