



24th Sunday Ordinary Time – 17 September 2023

FR. GABRIEL DALY OUTSPOKEN IRISH THEOLOGIAN RIP



The Church Is Always in Need of Reform is the title of a book by eminent Augustinian theologian and ecumenist Fr Gabriel Daly, who died on August 30th aged 95. It was written when he was 90, and reflects his life's pursuit of truth and wish for a reformed Catholic Church. He was one of the most significant Irish theologians never to be silenced by the Vatican, often a cause of bemusement both to him and his friends. Fellow Irish theologians and priests Seán Fagan, Tony Flannery, Gerard

Moloney, Owen O'Sullivan, Brian D'Arcy, and Iggy O'Donovan suffered the heavy hand of Benedict XVI for holding views like Gabriel's on women priests, homosexuality, the full participation of women in defining teachings and church governance. A church that preaches justice needs to exercise justice in its relationships with its theologians. Gabriel was unflinching in his support of his silenced colleagues. He defended fearlessly those whom the church silenced for raising legitimate questions for today's world of critical believers who seek to make the Gospel relevant for their lives. He shared their concerns about the direction of the institutional church and the unrealised reforms of Vatican II, which called for a more inclusive, participative church community defined by the council as "The people of God" in a "Pilgrim church". He was in tune with Pope Francis's radical condemnation of clericalism as an obstacle to faith and his desire for a listening church in dialogue with the world and other faiths. Truth, Fr Daly believed, was established by discussion and argument, not by proclamations of authority and pre-packaged apologetics. Critical believers should be welcomed, as they profess a faith seeking understanding: the legitimate right of all believers. Those who knew Fr Daly would not be surprised with the first reading at his funeral Mass from the book of Wisdom: "Wisdom is radiant and unfading, and she is easily discerned by those who love her, and is found by those who seek her" (6: 1-19). Like the Old Testament prophet Amos, who challenged his community to return to their covenant with God committed to ethical living, Fr Daly sought reform of the institutional Catholic Church to return to an authentic Christianity. Prophecy in the Old Testament was less predictive prophecy but frequently a critique of the lifestyles of many communities in which the prophets lived. Their task was to call their communities back to the authentic values of their covenant with God. In a way similar to the prophets Amos and Hosea, Gabriel fearlessly called the institutional church to return to Gospel values. He believed it was a moral duty to challenge those who opposed the reforms advocated by Vatican II. His formative years of theological study were spent in Rome which he said taught him "what to think". The Augustinians, with great wisdom, sent him to the University of Oxford to take a degree in history. The difference between Rome of that time and Oxford was in his often repeated "Oxford taught me how to think". He embraced university life with enthusiasm, singing in the Bach choir. His love of music was life sustaining as was his love of rugby, where he qualified as a county referee. A passionate ecumenist, he believed in the potential for both unity and diversity in the Christian churches. With Michael Hurley SJ Gabriel founded the Irish School of Ecumenics in 1970. He lectured in the Milltown Institute until he was invited to join staff at the School of Hebrew Biblical and Theological Studies in Trinity College Dublin, where he taught until his retirement in 2002. In 2017, his 90th year, Fr Daly spoke of an Ecumenical Theology of the Eucharist at a conference organised to commemorate Luther's 95 theses, which Luther intended to be the basis of reform. Luther was an Augustinian friar, who, 500 years before, shared Fr Daly's passion for reform. Fr Daly lamented the Catholic Church's denial of the right to share the Eucharist with other Christians, highlighting the unnecessary use of metaphysical terminology to describe what happened at the Last Supper. As a defender of the faith and explorer of truth, Fr Daly identified how far the institutional church had wandered from the Gospel values of love and compassion. "Truth and justice demand acknowledgment of the legitimacy of opposing opinions and attitudes which have a right to be held and heard. Truth is not established by proclamations of authority, unity does not entail conformity". Awareness that we all live in different historical times, in different spaces, in different cultures for Gabriel meant that Gospel values need to be contextualised: how those values are incarnated in life is the mission of the institution in service to humanity. He lived to see Pope Francis's reform of the Curia and the Congregation for the Doctrine of

the Faith and a subsequent ending of the silencing of others who raise legitimate questions: those who seek to give the tradition contemporary relevance, with the insight that Gospel values may be lived differently in communities local and national.

Courtesy : Gina Menzies and the Irish Times



Dublin Festival of History

Now in its eleventh year, Dublin Festival of History has built a reputation for shining a fresh perspective on history and its importance in our everyday lives, attracting best-selling Irish and international historians to Dublin for a high-profile programme of history talks and debate each Autumn. This year's Festival of History will run from 25 September to 15 October 2023, with a Big Weekend at the Printworks in Dublin Castle from Friday 29 September to Sunday 1 October. Enjoy 195+ free in-person & online events at venues all across the city.

www.dublinfestivalofhistory.ie



Beta

An exciting line-up of artists, exhibitions and installations has been announced for Beta, Ireland's first arts and technology festival, which will take place from Thursday November 2nd to Monday November 5th at The Digital Hub and the surrounding Liberties area. Beta will focus on artificial intelligence as well as quantum technologies, data rights and sustainability, through a combination of creativity, debate, interactive installations, projections, and engaging exhibitions.

24TH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME

Penitential Rite

Our God is patient and merciful, Slow to anger and abounding in kindness. Let us call to mind that goodness.

Lord, you are the source of all goodness. Lord have mercy

Lord, you seek the lost and rejoice in the found.
Christ have mercy

Lord, you call us to at-one-ment with you, your creation, and each other. Lord have mercy

May our gracious God have mercy on us, forgive us our sin and bring us to life everlasting. Amen

Sirach 27:30-28:7

Resentment and anger, these are foul things, and both are found with the sinner. He who exacts vengeance will experience the vengeance of the Lord, who keeps strict account of sin. Forgive your neighbour the hurt he does you, and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven. If a man nurses anger against another, can he then demand compassion from the Lord? Showing no pity for a man like himself, can he then plead for his own sins? Mere creature of flesh, he cherishes resentment; who will forgive him his sins? Remember the last things, and stop hating, remember dissolution and death, and live by the commandments.

Remember the commandments, and do not bear your neighbour ill-will; remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook the offence.

Romans 14:7-9

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ both died and came to life, it was so that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

Alleluia, alleluia!

I give you a new commandment: love one another, just as I have loved you, says the Lord. Alleluia!

Matthew 18:21-35

Peter went up to Jesus and said, 'Lord, how often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As often as seven times?' Jesus answered, 'Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times. 'And so the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who decided to settle his accounts with his servants. When the reckoning began, they brought him a man who owed ten thousand talents; but he had no means of paying, so his master gave orders that he should be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, to meet the debt. At this, the servant threw himself down at his master's feet. "Give me time" he said "and I will pay the whole sum." And the servant's master felt so sorry for him that he let him go and cancelled the debt. Now as this servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow servant who owed him one hundred denarii; and he seized him by the throat and

began to throttle him. "Pay what you owe me" he said. His fellow servant fell at his feet and implored him, saying, "Give me time and I will pay you". But the other would not agree; on the contrary, he had him thrown into prison till he should pay the debt. His fellow servants were deeply distressed when they saw what had happened, and they went to their master and reported the whole affair to him. Then the master sent for him. "You wicked servant," he said "I cancelled all that debt of yours when you appealed to me. Were you not bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?" And in his anger the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive your brother from your heart.'

Prayer of the Faithful

Father, Son and Spirit, you are the God of compassion and love. For this we praise you and thank you.
Lord hear us

We pray that the Church as an institution will reflect God's kindness and understanding. Lord hear us

We pray that people, communities and institutions, who are abusive and oppressive by nature, may find a new way of being. Lord hear us

We remember all who have died, and those who mourn for them. Lord, unite us in the kingdom of your love forever. Lord hear us

Because we have not cared for our planet and it's environment as we should have, the people of Morocco and Libya and many other places are suffering greatly. Help us, Lord, to change our ways. Lord hear us

In quiet we call to mind those who need our prayer and support.....
Lord hear us



Reflection

Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. "Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs". This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she "groans in travail". We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters.

Pope Francis—'Laudato Si'