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Beethoven's Homage to Summer

Plough Music Series

Colin Fields

Summer, wrote Gerard Manley Hopkins, is "barbarous in beauty." Inspired by similar feelings, Beethoven wrote his sixth symphony, the "Pastoral," which describes a summer day spent in the country. The loveliness of this music is as familiar as that of a summer day and no less worth stopping to take time to contemplate.

Beethoven loved nature and often walked in the countryside, stopping to write down ideas on the sheets of music paper he kept folded in his pocket. "How glad I am to be able to roam in wood and thicket, among the trees and flowers and rocks. No one can love the country as I do. My bad hearing does not trouble me here. In the country every tree seems to speak to me, saying, 'Holy! Holy!' In the woods there is enchantment which expresses all things!" To Therese, his "immortal beloved," he wrote, "Do not forests, trees, rocks re-echo that for which humankind longs?"

In one of his conversational notebooks – his means of communication after his deafness made conversation impossible – he records this from an exchange with a friend:

Here, surrounded by the products of nature, often I sit for hours, while my senses feast upon the spectacle of nature. Here the majestic sun is not concealed by any dirty roof made by human hands, here the blue sky is my sublime roof. When in the evening I contemplate the sky in wonder and the host of luminous bodies continually revolving within their orbits, suns or earths by name, then my spirit rises beyond these constellations so many millions of miles away to the primeval source from which all creation flows and from which new creations shall flow eternally.

When, now and again, I endeavor to formulate my seething emotions in music – oh, then I find that I am terribly deceived; I throw my scrawled paper upon the ground and feel firmly convinced that never shall anyone born on this earth be able to express in sounds, words, colors, or stone those heavenly images that hover before his excited imagination in his happiest hours... Yes, it must come from above, that which strikes the heart; otherwise it's nothing but notes, body without spirit, isn't that so? What is body without spirit? Earth or muck, isn't it?

The spirit must rise from the earth, in which for a time the divine spark is confined, and much like the field to which the ploughman entrusts precious seed, it must flower and bear many fruits, and, thus multiplied, rise again towards the source from which it has flown. For only by persistent toil of the faculties granted to them do created things revere the creator of infinite nature.

"He who has ever had a notion of country life," Beethoven wrote of the Pastoral Symphony, "can imagine without too many descriptive words what the composer has intended." The first four movements depict the joys of a country walk, a country dance, the drama of a summer storm. Beethoven's unconventional heading for the fifth and final movement is: "Shepherds' song. Happy and thankful feelings after the storm." In brief program notes Beethoven wrote that the final movement should evoke "salutary feelings combined with thanks to the Deity," and the music concludes with a reflective and prayerful episode (8:17) which leads into the closing chords. According to critic Phillip Huscher:

The clouds finally roll away, the oboe promises better things to come in a wonderfully heartfelt phrase, and the flute, with its staccato scale, raises the curtain on Elysium. And so, to the yodeling of the clarinet and horn, we willingly believe F major to be the most beautiful key on earth.

Source: <https://www.plough.com/en/topics/culture/music/beethovens-homage-to-summer>

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www.csps.dublindiocese.ie

Thoughts For a Day

The person who is coldly hostile will always find the way closed. But one who can burn with enmity can also burn with love for God.

Rabbi Yaakov Yitzhak of Lublin: *Tales of the Hasidim*

It is not how much we are doing but how much love, how much honesty, how much faith is put into doing it. It makes no difference what we are doing. What you are doing, I cannot do, and what I am doing, you cannot do. Only sometimes we forget and we spend more time looking at somebody else and wishing we were doing something else. We waste our time thinking of tomorrow, and today we let the day pass, and yesterday is gone.

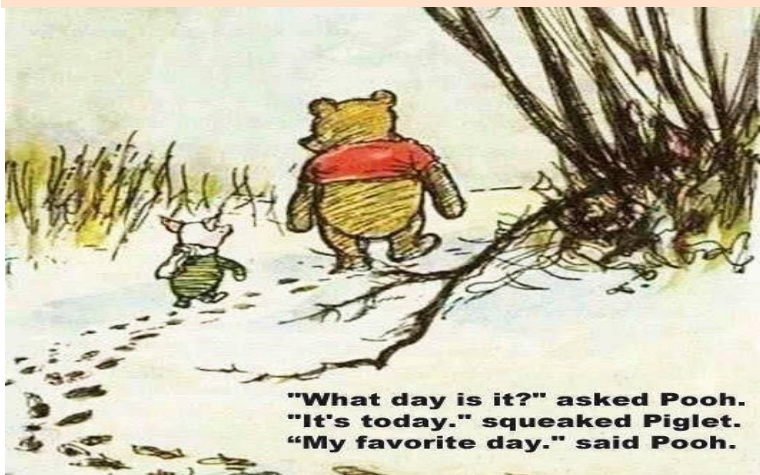
Mother Teresa, Her People and Her Work

“When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives mean the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares.”

Henri J.M. Nouwen, *Out of Solitude: Three Meditations on the Christian Life*

“My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.”

Thomas Merton, Thoughts in Solitude



“What day is it?” asked Pooh.
“It’s today.” squeaked Piglet.
“My favorite day.” said Pooh.

Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes

The Dublin Diocese takes two pilgrimages to Lourdes each year. The pilgrimage in September is one of the biggest events in the Diocese calendar and is lead by the Archbishop. About 2,000 pilgrims travel from all over the Diocese. Of these, 180 are sick pilgrims staying at the Accueil Notre Dame which is ‘a place of welcome’ close to the Grotto and with many of the facilities of a modern hospital. Another 550 of the pilgrims are voluntary helpers, made up of nurses and doctors, male and female helpers, known as handmaids and brancardiers, and a team of chaplains. A further 200 young people assist as well in the care of the sick pilgrims and many of these are from secondary schools and colleges from around the Diocese. The balance of the pilgrimage is made up of Parish Groups and individuals from every corner of the Diocese.

The Children’s Pilgrimage is a much smaller group, but a very important one, as it joins with thousands of other child pilgrims from all over the world each Easter Week. About forty children travel from Dublin assisted by the same number of helpers and a team of chaplains, doctors and nurses.

On this website you will be able to find out more about Lourdes and how you may be able to get more information on any section of our Diocesan Pilgrimage.

No other diocesan event brings more people together each year and is a reflection of the great Irish tradition of devotion to our Blessed Lady. In fact, the Irish have the largest presence in Lourdes, per head of population compared to any other nation.

If you need any further information we can be contacted using the details below: Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimages to Lourdes

Holy Cross Diocesan Centre
Clonliffe Road
Dublin 3

• 01-8376820/8087555

• 01-8360720

info@lourdes.dublindiocese.ie

Masses and Confession

Sundays: Vigil, 6pm (Saturday), 9.30am, 11am, 5pm

-Rosary daily after 10am mass

Adoration Blessed Sacrament, Weds 10.30-12.40

Church Collections

.W/e 8th July 2018

1st Collection: €995

Share Collection: €770

Weekday collections: €430

THANK YOU

In Memoriam

6pm, David Thompson (Months Mind)
11am, Stephen Magner (Anniversary)

Masses on 21st/22nd July 2018.

11am, Marion McEvelly (Months Mind)

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