

JESUS BRINGS THE KINGDOM WITH HIM

Br. John-Marmion Villa

**FAITH
IN THE
UNSEEN**

A few years ago, I went to see the film “Star Wars” on its opening night. This was to be an event like no other. The organization I was working for bought all the tickets for that evening’s showing. I was there with about 200 others, and the moment that the iconic John Williams theme started with the characteristic story line scrolling upwards on the screen, the cinema was electric! There were shouts and applause from everyone. We watched with great delight seeing our favourite intergalactic heroes appear.

A few weeks ago, I had the chance to visit St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York. To my great surprise, a wedding was about to begin. There were twice as many tourists as wedding guests. I found myself off to the side, with a great view of the main aisle. Other tourists were thinking the same thing I was: I have get my phone out and take a video of the bride! The wedding party had just arrived, and the organist began playing the wedding march. A few moments later, I was able to see the bride walking solemnly down the aisle, escorted by her father. They met the groom at the foot of the altar, and the father-of-the bride gave his daughter away to her soon-to-be husband. The two then walked up the steps into the sanctuary.

What do these two familiar occasions have in common? You might be thinking to yourself, “An eager anticipation.” If you were thinking that, you’re not too far off. But there’s one more step to take. An eager anticipation of what? *The arrival.*

Yes! The arrival ... of the movie starting ... of the bride meeting her groom. We’ve all been in situations like this, so it’s not too far of a stretch to say that today’s Gospel talks about the eager anticipation of the arrival of the kingdom. Throughout his Gospel (4:43, 6:20, 8:10, 10:9, to name a few), Luke talks about the kingdom of God as being present anytime Jesus is around. Jesus brings the kingdom with him! And not only that, today’s Gospel says that we have all been given that kingdom.

That sounds a little strange to the modern ear, no doubt. When I think “kingdom,” I think medieval castles and the gallantry of knights and noble ladies. But Jesus’ kingdom isn’t like that. His kingdom can only be seen by faith. Did you know that word is used 5 times in this week’s second reading. “Faith is the realization of what is hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb 11:1). This kind of faith is what is needed to see the kingdom of God here and now ... today, right where we are. It is this kind of faith that evokes that eager anticipation of the bridal procession or the start of the long-awaited movie.

If anyone else is like me, I need to learn how to make space in my life so that I can be more attuned to spiritual realities. My life can be so bombarded with all sorts of noise from the outside as well as the inside. I’m learning to slow down my life ... even when I am at home, or more so, when I am alone with the Lord in the solitude of prayer. This takes energy, courage, and discipline.

Our spiritual lives have taken a back seat to reason and emotion, neither of which are bad in themselves. But faith comes from a place other than the mind and heart, though definitely connected to them. When we allow ourselves to really live by faith as described in Hebrews, then we begin to see the kingdom living within me and all around me. Who doesn’t want more of that ... especially in today’s world?

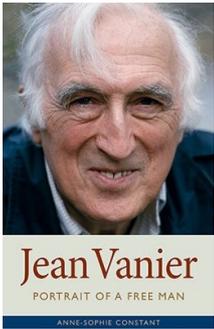
Br. John-Marmion Villa, BSC

**St Mary’s
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the
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Jean Vanier: Portrait of a Free Man

Anne-Sophie Constant

It's a crazy story. In August 1964 a thirty-six-year-old Canadian from a famous family – one who has already joined the navy during war at age thirteen, become an officer, earned a PhD, and taught ethics at the University of Toronto – takes up residence in a little house he just bought in the village of Trosly, France, with two mentally disabled men he has removed from a care home. The house, which he calls L'Arche (the Ark), has neither water nor electricity. His plan? None. He is just convinced he has to do it, touched by the silent cry of these men shut up in the gloomy, violent institution where he found them. His example is contagious; within months the community has grown to over fifty.

Jean Vanier is known and loved around the world for having created L'Arche, those unique communities of people with disabilities and their volunteer caregivers in more than one hundred and fifty sites on five continents. But Vanier is also a philosopher, a spiritual master who touches believers and nonbelievers alike, a tireless messenger of peace and ecumenism, and an adventurer with life full of twists and turns. Anne-Sophie Constant's literary biography paints a rare portrait of this extraordinary man and the events and influences that shaped his destiny.

“The story of Jean Vanier is the story of a free man – a man who knew how to become himself, who knew how to free himself from restraints and prejudices; from intellectual, religious, or moral habits; from his epoch; from popular opinion....Jean Vanier has transformed the lives of thousands of people with intellectually disabilities... [and] he has wrested thousands of parents from their dreadful solitude by transforming how they understand the disabilities of their own children....Where we see only failure, impossibility, weakness, and suffering, Jean Vanier sees beauty, and knows how to open the eyes of others to see it too.”

The author of this affectionate portrait, Dr. Anne-Sophie Constant, lectured at the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers in Paris until 2012. She has been a close friend of L'Arche and Jean Vanier for decades. She is the author of two acclaimed books, *Une enfance ultramarine* and *Jean Vanier*, which is published in English by Plough.

Book available from

<https://www.bookdepository.com/Jean-Vanier-Anne-Sophie-Constant/9780874861402>

THOUGHT FOR A DAY

Our expectation of the kingdom cannot be a passive waiting, a sweet, soft occupation with ourselves and our like-minded friends. No, if we truly expect God's kingdom, we will be filled with divine power. Then the social justice of the future – with its purity of heart and divine fellowship – will be realized now, wherever Jesus himself is present. Our belief in the future must bring change to the present! The spirit of expectation is the spirit of action because it is the spirit of faith. Faith is bravery. Faith is reality. If we have faith, even only a small seed, we cannot regard anything as impossible.

Eberhard Arnold

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IN MEMORIAM

9.30am, Peter Coyne (Anniversary)
Eamonn O'Coine (A/V)
11am< Annie and Christy McCabe (Anniversary)

Masses on 17th/18th August 2019
11am: Patrick Mc Evilly (1st Anniversary)

Masses and Confession

Sundays: Vigil, 6pm (Saturday), 9.30am, 11am, 5pm
Croatian Community Mass 6.30pm
Daily masses 10am and 12.40pm, Saturday 10am only
-Rosary daily after 10am mass

Adoration Blessed Sacrament, Weds 10.30-12.40

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS

1st Collection: €970
Share Collection: €640
Weekday collections: €370.

THANK YOU