



Nodding Greenhood Orchid

Eucalyptus rubida

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In late August, dozens of greenhood orchids dot the ground underneath the light forest cover of Glenburn. We have seen four varieties of them in Glenburn and the nearby ranges. Mountain Correa and Hardenbergia are also appearing, and Silver Wattle is being joined by Blackwood and Prickly Moses.



Reflection: A Spirituality for the Planet



Can we hope for a spirituality that the whole earth can embrace that will heal us, the people of the earth, the plants and animals of the earth, and very earth itself? Enough of duality; we are of the earth; we are the stuff of earth born into reflectivity, soul and creativity. As Christians, we have a duty to study this challenge in a christological manner, as it were through the eyes of Jesus. And what is crucial, I think for this challenge is not to hold Jesus Christ captive within the confines of Christian doctrine, but to make him and his vision available to the cosmos which is where his humanity originated.

I once heard someone describe Jesus as the first human in our tradition to wake up to his intimacy with God to the extent that he could say "The Father and I are one", and that this 'heresy' led to his death. Pathos that this splendid vision for humanity was rejected out of hand by the powers of the times. Pathos also that this statement of Jesus can be used to lock out the rest of humanity from the realization of a similar intimacy.

It seems a pity to me when the Christian churches preach Jesus Christ rather than the teachings of Jesus Christ. The big issues for Jesus were about love, justice, compassion and a 'kingdom' where these were enshrined, rather than about his own identity as divine. I like the notion that he came to 'cast fire' on the earth. I interpret this as a spirituality where fire, energy and creativity are to be found. I see this in movements like those related to feminism and the environment, though these movements are not always enriched with a spiritual vision.

Of the several authors I have read over the years, only one struck me as having a christic vision adequate for the times,

and that was Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. While his christology was never widely accepted, and now has been overtaken by time, his mystical experience, as told by his own writing, rings as authentic. This quote from *Christ in the World of Matter* as Pierre contemplated a picture of Jesus:

...I suddenly became aware that the figure's outlines were melting away: they were dissolving, but in a special manner, hard to describe in words. When I tried to hold in my gaze the outline of the figure of Christ it seemed to me to be clearly defined; but then if I let this effort relax, at once these contours, and the folds of Christ's garment, the lustre of his hair and the bloom of his flesh, all seemed to merge as it were (as though vanishing away) into the rest of the picture. It was as though the planes which marked off the figure of Christ from the world surrounding it were melting into a single vibrant surface whereon all demarcations vanished.

It seems to me that we need to look at the world with 'soft' eyes - do you know what I mean? Eyes not quite focussed but taking in the whole scene rather than focussing on individual things. This is a type of holistic viewing that you might find aids contemplation. As I gazed this week into the eyes of a wallaby munching away unconcernedly in our vegetable garden scarcely three metres from me, or into the eyes of the king parrot sitting on my hand, I wondered what they had eyes for, and how they viewed me in their field of vision. For me, and for many others this bond between the human and the animal or the flower is a little like Teilhard's image of Christ merging. He said: 'The entire universe was vibrant!'

We Christians desperately need to

enter into a shared spirituality with the rest of humanity, at the same time bringing to it a Christic vision that is not too tribal, or too contaminated by the patriarchal or hierarchical aspects of the Abrahamic tradition that plagues us in these days. The challenge of the times is a spiritual one, many agree, and it needs to be healed by a spiritual process and a spiritual journey for humanity, though this may well take a generation - if we have the time. No time now for retreating into the bunker. Let's take our wisdom and our scriptures and put them beside things like the Earth Charter and bring evangelization into a new perspective. This is a most exciting challenge.

The spiritual journey, the search for God and oneness - for all humanity - must needs pass through the reality of the 21st century. We have to redeem the world of social and ecological injustice. There is nothing more urgent. The fourteen billion year expansion of Creation now needs hearts and souls 'soaked dark with love' (Sufi poet Hafiz) and true followers of Christ have an example to follow in their hero's footsteps, who trod the path of wisdom as none had trod before.



'Wally' in the garden