

I might be getting senile

I think I might be getting senile at this stage of my life. During the past few months, I have been doing some research, not on anything to do remotely about priesthood or religion but on something totally different.

My mind has been filled with statistics, comparisons, companies, quotations, and questions. I have been swimming upstream in brand and generic names; performance ratings; maximum output and minimum input; review ratings and guarantees; warranties and replacements; with AC and DC; with Photovoltaic and thermodynamic; with inverters and diverters; with mono and poly; with smart meters and the grid..

If I had any sense, I would have kept away from such mind-boggling stuff and just enjoy my life free senility. But, alas, I have been too stubborn and instead, wanted to fill my overcrowded and exerted brain with some more stuff. There is only so much room in my suitcase brain.

As you might guess, I have ventured into the unknown territory of installing solar panels on my house in order to become more efficient and more cost effective in my use of electricity by allowing the good Lord to share his free gift of sunshine. Maybe, by harnessing God's free gift, I can play some part in appreciating and sustaining the beautiful earth He has given us to enjoy.

Maybe, I am a bit crazy pursuing a new adventure when, instead, I could be sitting in my rocking chair watching the world go by. But, I suppose, even in my old age, there is still something novel and exciting about embracing and venturing into a new adventure.

With the soaring cost of electricity, and driven by the conflict in Ukraine, Europeans are challenged to become more energy conscious and creation-centered in their outlook and lifestyle. All are challenged to replace our carbon footprints with a God given footprint we need to see more clearly.

I noticed that one of the welcome blessings in disguise from Covid was that more and more people are embracing the challenge to become more self-sustaining. Maybe, because during Covid people's movements were restricted. They just couldn't go to the grocery store or go window shopping at their latest whim; that, instead, they had to become more creative with their time and energy. Many used that creativity to explore some creative avenues such as organic gardening, reflecting more deeply on life's purpose and our ability to live within it, discovering new hobbies and reflecting more on how they can contribute to making the world a better place.

I can still hear that distinctive voice of scientist and visionary, Carl Sagan, who said "we are set on a path that will take us to the stars – unless in some monstrous capitulation to stupidity and greed, we destroy ourselves first." Our life support mechanisms have been badly damaged. Our nourishing womb has been raped. So many of us choose to turn a blind eye to the destruction of our planet and allow the rich and vested interests to remain in their guilt-free, artificial comfort zones. We have become predators rather than providers; indifferent rather than involved; isolated rather than included; excusers rather than executors; tolerators rather than transformers.

One of my favourite poets is Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Her poem, *Aurora Leigh*, has these lines:

*Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush is afire with God;
But only he who sees takes off his shoes,
The rest sit round it, and pluck blackberries.*

We seem to have lost the sense of awe and respect, the sense of surprise and engagement, the sense of wonder and the miraculous. We would rather sit around and pick blackberries.

God, in creating the world and sharing it with us, challenged us to take care of it by cultivating and tilling it to bear more fruit, rather than steal and pillage it.

Gerard Manley Hopkins reminds us that the earth is "charged with the grandeur of God." It is crushed, wrecked by our insatiable desire to control and manipulate rather than embrace and become cocreators. In spite of that, in life, "lives the dearest freshness deep down things;" that we must treasure, harness and build a tapestry, guided by the powerful hands of the Great Weaver.

I just received an email saying my latest bill is on line. I'm curious to see how much sunshine the good Lord has showered upon me and my wallet.