

**SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT, 2016**

**20 JULY 1969. DO YOU RECALL WHAT HAPPENED ON THAT DAY? WORDS LIKE UNIQUE AND HISTORIC ARE TOO SMALL TO DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENED THAT DAY. ON THAT DATE, AND IT WAS A SUNDAY, THE AMERICAN APOLLO 11 LUNAR MODULE LANDED ON THE MOON, AND A MAN FROM THIS PLANET EARTH STEPPED ON TO THE SURFACE OF THE MOON WITH THESE WORDS: "THAT'S ONE SMALL STEP FOR A MAN, AND ONE GIANT LEAP FOR MANKIND. SOMETHING ELSE HAPPENED ON THE MOON THAT DAY. VERY FEW PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT IT. FOR US CHRISTIANS IT WAS ALSO MORE THAN UNIQUE AND MORE THAN HISTORIC. BEFORE THE ASTRONAUTS, NEIL ARMSTRONG AND BUZZ ALDRIN, OPENED THE HATCH OF THE LUNAR MODULE THEY HAD A BRIEF HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE, USING THE CONSECRATED BREAD AND WINE THEY HAD BROUGHT WITH THEM FROM THEIR CHURCH BACK HOME. AS I SAY, MOST PEOPLE WHO WITNESSED THIS EVENT DID NOT KNOW THAT THE TWO ASTRONAUTS WALKED ON THE MOON STRENGTHENED BY THE BODY AND BLOOD OF JESUS THE CHRIST.**

**HOLY COMMUNION ON THE MOON. WHAT CAN WE SEE IN THOSE FEW SACRED MINUTES IN THE SPACE CAPSULE WHEN NEIL ARMSTRONG AND**

**BUZZ ALDRIN RECEIVED THE BREAD OF HEAVEN AND THE CUP OF  
SALVATION ON THE MOON?**

**HERE IS WHAT I SEE.**

**I SEE WHO JESUS THE CHRIST TRULY IS AND WHAT OUR FAITH IS TRULY ALL  
ABOUT. JESUS THE CHRIST AND OUR FAITH REACH BEYOND EVERY  
CIVILIZATION, BEYOND EVERY CULTURE AND INDEED BEYOND THIS PLANET  
EARTH, OUR ISLAND HOME. I SEE THAT WE HAVE TO KNOW JESUS THE  
CHRIST AND OUR FAITH AND OURSELVES IN THE BIG PICTURE—THE  
BIGGEST PICTURE. I SEE THAT WE HAVE TO KNOW GOD’S RELATIONSHIP TO  
US AND OUR RELATIONSHIP TO HIM IN TERMS OF THE WHOLE OF  
CREATION. WE HAVE TO KNOW JESUS THE CHRIST AND OUR FAITH AND  
OURSELVES IN THE PICTURE OF THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE—IN THE COSMIC BIG  
PICTURE AND IN TERMS OF EONS AND EONS OF TIME. WE HAVE TO ASK, IS  
OUR PICTURE OF JESUS THE CHRIST WAY TOO SMALL? IS OUR PICTURE OF  
OUR FAITH WAY TOO SMALL? IS OUR PICTURE OF OURSELVES, OF WHO WE  
ARE, WAY TO SMALL? IS OUR PICTURE OF OUR DESTINY AS HUMAN BEINGS  
WAY TO SMALL? IS OUR PICTURE OF GOD WAY TOO SMALL? IS OUR  
PICTURE OF OUR HOPE WAY TO SMALL? IS OUR PICTURE OF OUR FUTURE**

**WAY TOO SMALL? ARE OUR QUESTIONS WAY TOO SMALL? IS OUR  
CHRISTMAS WAY TOO SMALL?**

**MAYBE THESE QUESTIONS ARE TOO HEAVY FOR OUR SUNDAY MORNING.  
BUT HERE GOES.**

**OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH IS FANTASTIC. THIS IS THE WORD TO DESCRIBE IT.  
FANTASTIC. WHAT OUR FAITH REALLY AND TRULY MEANS OUTSTRIPS ANY  
AND ALL SCIENCE FICTION. WHAT DOES OUR FAITH REALLY AND TRULY  
MEAN? WE CAN EXPECT THAT A LOT OF CHRISTIANS, AND MAYBE MOST  
CHRISTIANS, WOULD ANSWER LIKE THIS. IN JESUS THE CHRIST GOD  
REDEEMS US FROM SIN AND THAT MEANS WE CAN FIND PEACE IN THIS LIFE  
AND WHEN WE DIE WE WILL HAVE ETERNAL PEACE WITH GOD. IS THIS  
WHAT OUR FAITH IS REALLY AND TRULY ALL ABOUT? AS CONSOLING AS  
THAT IS, CAN WE CALL THAT FANTASTIC? HARDLY.**

**OUR FAITH REALLY AND TRULY IS NOT MERELY ABOUT THINGS SPIRITUAL  
AND HEAVEN BEYOND US SOMEWHERE. IT'S ABOUT HERE AND NOW. IT'S  
ABOUT A GODLY VISION FOR THE HERE AND NOW THAT SEES FAR, FAR INTO  
THE FUTURE, AND INDEED SEES INTO FOREVER. IT'S ABOUT AN  
ENTERPRISE—A WORK—A CALL TO THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE—THE WHOLE  
HUMAN FAMILY. IT IS ABOUT THE SPIRIT OF GOD THE CREATOR WHO**

DWELLS WITHIN US AND AMONG US, THE SAME DIVINE SPIRIT WHO DWELLED IN JESUS THE CHRIST, IT'S ABOUT THE DIVINE SPIRIT WHO EMPOWERS US FOR THE WORK OF THE ONGOING CREATION AND TRANSFORMATION OF ALL THINGS, AND NOT ONLY THE THINGS OF THE PLANET EARTH, BUT "ALL THINGS", THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE, THE COSMOS. OUR FAITH IS ABOUT BELIEVING THAT THE MATERIAL STUFF OF THIS PLANET AND THE STUFF OF OUR LIVES, AND THE MATERIAL STUFF OF THE WHOLE UNIVERSE, THE COSMOS, ARE THE VERY BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE ETERNAL KINGDOM OF GOD, IN WHICH GOD WILL BE ALL IN ALL. OUR IS A COSMIC FAITH. JESUS IS THE COSMIC CHRIST. OURS IS A COSMIC LIFE. OUR FUTURE IS A COSMIC FUTURE. GOD THE CREATOR WAS AND IS AT WORK IN JESUS THE CHRIST. GOD IS AT WORK IN AND THROUGH US.

I THINK THIS IS WHAT WE SHOULD SEE IN THAT HOLY COMMUNION ON THE MOON. WE ARE EMPOWERED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD TO MAKE THIS PLANET EARTH, TO MAKE OUR LIVES, TO MAKE OUR FUTURE, TO MAKE ALL CREATION WHAT GOD WILLS IT ALL TO BE. THIS EARTH, THE MOON, THIS GALAXY, ALL GALAXIES, THIS UNIVERSE, THIS COSMOS ARE TO BE CONTINUALLY CREATED AND TRANSFORMED SO THAT IN THE END, EONS AND EONS AND EONS OF TIME FROM HERE AND NOW, THE HUMAN FAMILY

**AND ALL THINGS , ALL THAT IS, WILL LIVE AND EXIST AS GOD LIVES AND EXISTS. SO THE CREATED AND THE UNCREATED WILL BE ONE, THE HUMAN AND THE DIVINE WILL BE ONE, MATTER AND SPIRIT WILL BE ONE, TIME AND ETERNITY WILL BE ONE.**

**WE CAN PUT THIS FAITH INTO HUMAN WORDS, BUT WE CANNOT PICTURE AND WE CANNOT EVEN IMAGINE WHAT THIS FAITH REALLY AND TRULY MEANS, AND WHERE WE AND ALL THINGS, ALL CREATION, ARE HEADED. WE FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO GRASP THIS FAITH. IT IS FANTASTIC, IMPOSSIBLE TO GRASP ESPECIALLY BECAUSE WE HAVE ONLY JUST BEGUN. ALL WE HAVE TO LOOK AT IS A VERY SKETCHY OUTLINE OF THE DIVINE ARCHITECT'S DESIGN. IT'S EARLY IN THE STORY OF OUR FAITH—IT'S ONLY 2000 YEARS. IT'S EARLY IN THE HUMAN STORY. THE FIRST HUMAN BEINGS APPEARED IN THE PROCESS OF EVOLUTION ONLY 150,000 YEARS AGO. THE FACT IS WE HAVE ONLY JUST BEGUN.**

**IT WAS A UNIQUE AND HISTORIC EVENT TO LAND ON THE MOON. WHAT EVENTS WILL BE HAPPENING, WHAT WILL WE BE LIKE, WHAT WILL THINGS BE LIKE, A THOUSAND YEARS FROM NOW, 10,000 YEARS FROM NOW, 50,000 YEARS FROM NOW?**

HOLY COMMUNION ON THE MOON. AN AWESOME EVENT. WE HAVE ONLY JUST BEGUN TO SEE WHAT GOD WILLS TO DO FOR US AND IN US THROUGH JESUS THE CHRIST. WE HAVE ONLY JUST BEGUN TO SEE HOW GOD CALLS US AND EMPOWERS US TO LIVE. WE HAVE ONLY JUST BEGUN TO SEE WHAT GOD CALLS US AND EMPOWERS US TO DO. WE HAVE ONLY JUST BEGUN TO SEE THE COSMIC ENTERPRISE BEFORE US. WE HAVE ONLY JUST BEGUN TO SEE WHAT IT MEANS THAT THROUGH JESUS THE CHRIST WE ARE CALLED AND EMPOWERED TO BE PARTNERS WITH THE INFINITE, CREATING, TRANSFORMING GOD. WE HAVE ONLY JUST BEGUN TO SEE WHAT IT MEANS WHEN WE SAY "I BELIEVE".

CHRISTMAS IS FANTASTIC. WE CELEBRATE NOT ONLY THE BIRTH OF THE CHRIST CHILD. WE CELEBRATE THE BIRTH OF A FANTASTIC FUTURE. WE WHO CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS INVITE THE WHOLE HUMAN FAMILY, EVERYONE EVERYWHERE, TO TURN FROM ALL THE BREAKING DOWN AND TO TURN TO THE BUILDING UP—TO JOIN IN THIS ENTERPRISE. IT IS FANTASTIC. IT IS BEYOND FANTASTIC.

AMEN.