24th February 2023

Spectrum

"The refraction of light agrees with the grand principle that Nature always uses the simplest means to accomplish its effects."

Pierre Louis Moreau de Maupertuis

Accord de différentes loix de la nature qui avoient jusqu'ici paru incompatibles (1744) ("Accord between different forms of nature that seemed incompatible.")

Following my thoughts about "reflection" yesterday, I should confess that I'm not a scientist like Pierre Louis Maupertuis. But I did study physics in university, and one section of my course was looking at the transmission of light. I know, therefore, that light can be amplified, strengthened by the use of reflectors, from the humble hand-torch to the most powerful lighthouse. But as well as being reflected, light can also be *refracted*.

According to "BBC Bitesize" (https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize)

When a wave or light ray moves from one medium to another, its speed changes, and the direction may change too. This property ... is called refraction ... A good example ... is when you see the bottom of a swimming pool. The light travels from the bottom of the pool, through the water, then through the air into your eye; ... the pool often appears to be shallower than it really is.

An even better example is the rainbow. When the pure light of the sun hits a raincloud at a particular angle, the light changes. It's split into a spectrum – from red to violet – and gives us the most remarkable sight. From "fat" rainbows to faint ones, from little ones to double rainbows, what we're seeing is light being changed into a myriad of colours.

We are called to reflect the Light and pass it on stronger as a result. But we also "refract" that Light, so that it shines in a spectrum. With the rainbow in the story of Noah, not only does the light shine after the flood, but it's offered in an array of colours. The rainbow of the LGBTQ+ community as a symbol of inclusiveness is such a great example of that.

And ponder this ... beyond what we *see* in the spectrum – from the red to violet of rainbows – there are parts of the spectrum we *don't* see – infrared, ultraviolet and beyond. Might there be transmissions of the Light of the World that are as yet unseen and beyond our understanding? Now, there's a spectrum of light that that could be *even* more wonderful.

A prayer for today

A spectrum of your Light even beyond my seeing? Goodness, I'm glad to be part of that. Amen

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