

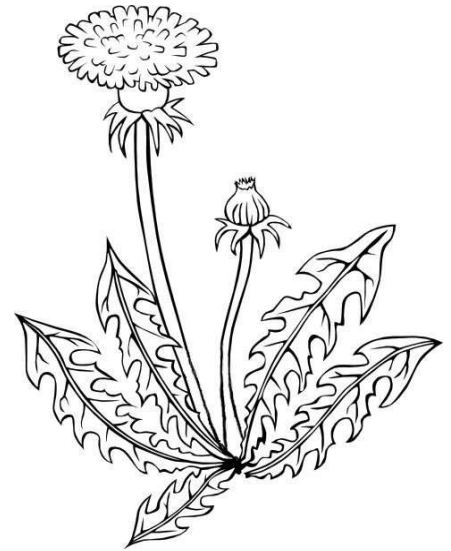
Sermon on Matthew 6:25-34 / May 2023

Dear congregation!

Jesus repeatedly points to nature, to God's creation: He uses the birds in the sky as an example, the lilies of the field.

This sermon in the month of May is about a piece of nature. This is also connected to the fact that our Synod decided at the end of April to join the EcoChurch programme (www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk).

The little piece of nature is pictured here. There are supposedly a hundred different names for this plant in German alone: Löwenzahn, Hundebblume, Pustebblume, Milchblume, Sonnenwirbel, Kuhblume ...



This small inconspicuous plant is a true messenger of spring. I noticed it again on the bike ride to the Synod in Swanwick. Together with our curate Anna I cycled through beautiful spring landscapes in Gloucestershire,

Worcestershire and Derbyshire. The lush green meadows along the way were dotted with yellow, full of tiny dandelion flowers. The colour yellow is good for the eye and the soul. Goethe lists it as an antidepressant, so to speak, in his Theory of Colours.

The combination of green and yellow, grass and dandelion, simply refreshes the soul. Yet these are such simple little plants that often grow inconspicuously along the path. Perhaps some of you know the story by Wolfgang Borchert: Die Hundebblume? It is set in wartime. A conscientious objector who has been put in prison by the Nazis discovers a flowering dandelion in the drab, grey prison yard. This becomes a small sign of hope for him in this terrible time and environment.

By the way, the dandelion originally comes from West Asia. In the meantime, it has spread all over the world because it is very adaptable. That is probably why there are so many different names for the dandelion all over the world. But this little plant can also remind us that we are all connected worldwide. Together we inhabit this planet. Together we must preserve and protect it.

But the real wonder of the dandelion is not its adaptability or its spread. It is a small, inconspicuous plant when it is not flowering by the hundreds in a meadow or turning into dandelions. And yet there is great power in it - a healing power for life. There are life-sustaining healing properties in this simple, God-given part of creation. As a plant, the dandelion contains many vital and mineral substances. I don't know if Hildegard von Bingen knew about the dandelion? In any case, it would fit perfectly into her concept of healing works of creation. Seven healing effects are attributed to the dandelion. These are the plant or the root or also the sap, which looks like milk, hence the name: milk flower.

Firstly, dandelion has a diuretic effect and therefore helps, for example, against kidney stones (the French name for dandelion: Pissenlit). In addition, the milk-like juice helps with skin problems because it has an antibacterial effect. This also supports wound healing and helps with insect bites. Dandelion also helps with stomach and intestinal complaints and the plant generally strengthens the body. It is effective against diabetes and the creatine contained strongly in dandelion strengthens the liver.

In addition, dandelion can be used to make healthy food and drink: Dandelion honey, dandelion salad (a delicacy in Austria), caffeine-free tea or coffee made from the root (the older ones among us will certainly remember this) or nowadays a healthy green smoothie.

Next to all this, the little dandelion flower looks simply beautiful. It gladdens the heart and can teach us something about the beauty of simple, natural things. A real little miracle of divine creation that we just have to consciously notice. Jesus draws our attention to these wonders in his words: See the flowers in the field and hear the song of the birds in the sky.

Yours Kai Thierbach

