

Naomi, our granddaughter, has started talking.

Words like quack-quack & tweet-tweet pepper our conversation.

Basically any tweet-tweet which floats is a quack-quack,

whereas any quack-quack which sinks is a tweet-tweet.

This subtle distinction was confused when Meow-Meow,

aka their neighbour's cat, climbed onto the bird table,

clearly neither a tweet-tweet nor a quack-quack

but not averse to consuming either.

Despite her limited English vocabulary,

Naomi chatters on at breakneck pace

deploying what is clearly a highly joyous, sing-song language.

We duly nod and smile and try to look wise,

whilst not having a clue what she's going on about.

I noticed a few phrases and sound patterns repeat themselves,

a tell-tale sign that there is language there,

but what that language is, I know not.

I do wonder if it is the language of heaven.

My last 8 am was invaded by a Greek Orthodox family

and I noticed their children received communion

whilst their fathers just received a blessing.

The Greek Orthodox believe that children, babes in particular,

are innocent and therefore most worthy to receive Christ.

Is the prattle of toddlers actually the language of innocence?

Let's face it, the language of heaven, the language of all saints,

will - horror of horrors - not be English, although like Naomi,

saints may throw in a few English words to get us hooked.

Like love, hope, forgiveness, kindness, gentleness, peace...

You sense whatever language Christ spoke in for our Gospel,

be it Aramaic or Hebrew or Greek, it's not his first language.

He's got the vocabulary and the syntax OK,

but then groups words that are utterly incompatible.

Blessed/happy, are the poor, the meek, the bereaved, the pure,
the merciful, the starving, the peacemakers, the persecuted.

Those in torture cells in the Crimea: happy??

Those starving in Samalia: happy?? Really??

Christ is speaking the topsy-turvy language of heaven,
the language of the saints, sounding perverse to our ears.

All Saintstide prompts us to give our earthly language a rest.

Be it politics or the Church: too much talk, too much chattering.

The gift of silence enables us to hear strains of heaven's music

- after all a choir of 144,000 will cover quite a distance –

calling us to bask in the presence and victory of the Lamb.

‘The lambs are slaughtered by the men of power,

And death squads spread their curse across the world.

But every Herod dies, and comes alone

To stand in silence before the Lamb upon the throne.’

Or in Naomi-speak: before the Baa Baa upon the throne.