

Parish of Our Lady of the Annunciation - King's Lynn

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Deacon Shaun's Daily Bulletin

Friday, 6th November 2020

Dear Friends, Good morning to you.

I hope you had a good day yesterday.

Today is a Feria in the 31st week of the year.

The First reading for Mass today is a reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians (3:17-4:1)

My brothers, **be united in following my rule of life. Take as your models everybody who is already doing this and study them as you used to study us.** I have told you often, and I repeat it today with tears, there are many who are behaving as the enemies of the cross of Christ. They are destined to be lost. They make foods into their god and they are proudest of something they ought to think shameful; the things they think important are earthly things. **For us, our homeland is in heaven, and from heaven comes the saviour we are waiting for, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will transfigure these wretched bodies of ours into copies of his glorious body.** He will do that by the same power with which he can subdue the whole universe.

So then, my brothers and dear friends, **do not give way but remain faithful in the Lord.** I miss you very much, dear friends; you are my joy and my crown.

How did you get on with reading the Gospel Passage from Luke 10: 25-37?, which as I said yesterday is in the latest encyclical letter "Fratelli Tutti" (On Fraternity and Social Friendship) by Pope Francis.

Following the parable in the encyclical letter Pope Francis shares the context in Paragraphs 57-68 which I share with you:

This parable has to do with an age-old problem. Shortly after its account of the creation of the world and of man, the Bible takes up the issue of human relationships. Cain kills his brother Abel and then hears God ask: "Where is your brother Abel?" (Gen 4:9). His answer is one that we ourselves all too often give: "Am I my brother's keeper?" (ibid.). By the very question he asks, God leaves no room for an appeal to determinism or fatalism as a justification for our own indifference. Instead, he encourages us to create a different culture, in which we resolve our conflicts and care for one another.

The Book of Job sees our origin in the one Creator as the basis of certain common rights: “Did not he who made me in the womb also make him? And did not the same one fashion us in the womb?” (Job 31:15). Many centuries later, Saint Irenaeus would use the image of a melody to make the same point: “One who seeks the truth should not concentrate on the differences between one note and another, thinking as if each was created separately and apart from the others; instead, he should realize that one and the same person composed the entire melody”.

In earlier Jewish traditions, the imperative to love and care for others appears to have been limited to relationships between members of the same nation. The ancient commandment to “love your neighbour as yourself” (Lev 19:18) was usually understood as referring to one’s fellow citizens, yet the boundaries gradually expanded, especially in the Judaism that developed outside of the land of Israel. We encounter the command not to do to others what you would not want them to do to you (cf. Tob 4:15). In the first century before Christ, Rabbi Hillel stated: “This is the entire Torah. Everything else is commentary”. The desire to imitate God’s own way of acting gradually replaced the tendency to think only of those nearest us: “The compassion of man is for his neighbour, but the compassion of the Lord is for all living beings” (Sir 18:13).

In the New Testament, Hillel’s precept was expressed in positive terms: “In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets” (Mt 7:12). This command is universal in scope, embracing everyone on the basis of our shared humanity, since the heavenly Father “makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good” (Mt 5:45). Hence the summons to “be merciful, just as your Father is merciful” (Lk 6:36).

In the oldest texts of the Bible, we find a reason why our hearts should expand to embrace the foreigner. It derives from the enduring memory of the Jewish people that they themselves had once lived as foreigners in Egypt:

“You shall not wrong or oppress a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Exodus 22:21).

“You shall not oppress a stranger; you know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Exodus 23:9).

“When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the stranger as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Leviticus 19:33-34).

“When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; it shall be for the sojourner, the orphan, and the widow. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt” (Deuteronomy 24:21-22).

The call to fraternal love echoes throughout the New Testament:

“For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself’” (Galatians 5:14).

“Whoever loves a brother or sister lives in the light, and in such a person there is no cause for stumbling. But whoever hates another believer is in the darkness” (1 John 2:10-11).

“We know that we have passed from death to life because we love one another. Whoever does not love abides in death” (1 John 3:14).

“Those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen” (1 Jn 4:20).

Yet this call to love could be misunderstood. Saint Paul, recognizing the temptation of the earliest Christian communities to form closed and isolated groups, urged his disciples to abound in love “for one another and for all” (1 Thess 3:12). In the Johannine community, fellow Christians were to be welcomed, “even though they are strangers to you” (3 Jn 5). In this context, we can better understand the significance of the parable of the Good Samaritan: love does not care if a brother or sister in need comes from one place or another. **For “love shatters the chains that keep us isolated and separate; in their place, it builds bridges. Love enables us to create one great family, where all of us can feel at home... Love exudes compassion and dignity”.**

A gentle reminder about our parish website:

<http://www.catholicparish-kingslynn.org.uk/>

And the link to our YouTube channel- Our Lady’s King’s Lynn TV which is:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8V030I7usRZiKoTlrwBAKg>

And finally do feel free to send me any news and photographs that you would like me to share in these emails.

With my love, thoughts and prayers,

Shaun

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