

Saturday 4th Week of Lent - Seek refuge in the Lord

We take refuge in the Lord not to gain vengeance, as Jeremiah says, but to bring healing and harmony. Ezekiel rightly understood God to be a God of mercy not vengeance when he writes *"I (God) take pleasure, not in the death of a wicked man but in the turning back of a wicked man who changes his ways to win life."* It is good that Jesus understood this. This is why he was able to embrace the cross and still forgive those who put him to death. As he said, *"They know not what they do."* Too easily can we judge people because of their background that may well be far from good, and dismiss them, when, all they need, is the opportunity and the necessary support to change the way they live for the better. As St Paul wrote *"I am sure of this, that He who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 1:6). *Your talent is God's gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God.* —Leo Buscaglia *"You are not here merely to make a living. You are here in order to enable the world to live more amply, with greater vision, with a finer spirit of hope and achievement. You are here to enrich the world, and you impoverish yourself if you forget the errand."* —Woodrow Wilson *"God is not afraid of new things! That is why he is continually surprising us, opening our hearts, and guiding us in unexpected ways."* - *"We were created for what the Gospel offers us: friendship with Jesus and love of our brothers and sisters"* (Evangelii Gaudium, 265). Pope Francis. And finally his blessing Urbi et Orbi : *"Dear brothers and sisters, from this place that tells of Peter's rock-solid faith, I would like this evening to entrust all of you to the Lord, through the intercession of Mary, Health of the People and Star of the stormy Sea. From this colonnade that embraces Rome and the whole world, may God's blessing come down upon you as a consoling embrace. Lord, may you bless the world, give health to our bodies and comfort our hearts. You ask us not to be afraid. Yet our faith is weak and we are fearful. But you, Lord, will not leave us at the mercy of the*

storm. Tell us again: 'Do not be afraid' (Mt 28:5). And we, together with Peter, 'cast all our anxieties onto you, for you care about us' (cf. 1Pet 5:7)."