

Reflection for Tuesday of 5th Week of Easter 2020

It is clear that Paul and Barnabas had great faith and trust in their new converts in those early Christian communities. After only a shortish amount of time with them, they felt confident to appoint Elders, Leaders of the community, and leave them in charge. As centuries passed and because of major historical events, that trust in the faithful became eroded. However, today there is a growing confidence in the Church in the aptitude of the faithful to share and live their faith with wisdom and courage. Today the Church wants to renew its trust and confidence it has in its faithful. During this time of Lockdown, it has been up to the members of each family to help and support each other in their faith, sustained only virtually rather than face to face. History has shown that the Christian faith in a number of countries was kept alive and active through the commitment of the faithful despite the absence of any priestly leadership for decades, even centuries. This shows not only the depth and courage of the faithful but that the Spirit of God is always there to lead and guide. Our Sunday celebrations of late have been enhanced by contributions from different people singing and others reading but also by the evident presence of people viewing on line. All this makes for an enhanced and more joyful celebration and shows that both priest and people are an integral part of any eucharistic celebration. Jesus speaks of peace in the Gospel amidst the fact that he is going to be taken away and killed. Jesus' peace is not free of conflict, not free of suffering or sorrow. It is a peace founded on the knowledge that the Father is present with us and among us. This is what makes the Sunday celebrations so special. It is this peace of Jesus, this peace of the Father, this peace of the Holy Spirit with which we are all blessed not just on Sunday but every day, even or especially when that presence is virtual.

From a poem by Malcolm Guite: **Jesus the Bread of Life**

And then comes One who speaks into our needs,
Who opens out the secret hopes we cherish,
Whose presence calls our hidden hearts to flourish,
Whose words unfold in us like living seeds:
Come to me, broken, hungry, incomplete,
I am the bread of life, break me and eat.

AND FINALLY: Three Irish men walking home from the pub: Shamus, Paddy & Liam. They take a shortcut through a graveyard. Shamus is the first one to fall over, "What's up Paddy asks?" "I tripped over a gravestone" said Shamus, "and the fella was 73 years old when he died....!" "Wow!" said Paddy, just as he himself tripped and fell. "This fella was 97 when he shuffled off" states Paddy, "and his name was John Taggart", "Wow!" says Liam, just as he goes flying over another gravestone, "Would you believe it? "Exclaims Liam, "This fella was 157...!" What was his name asks Shamus & Paddy, simultaneously..?" Liam bends down, striking a match in the gloom to see the name on the stone, rising slowly he says..... " His name was **Miles . . . from Dublin..**"