

Reflection Saturday Week 12 - St John Southworth – 2020

You could almost believe that, in the gospel, Jesus was speaking directly to John Southworth whose body is enshrined in Westminster Cathedral. Ministering in the first half of the 17th Century, he had a most difficult time and yet he persevered even after being arrested several times and cheating death on several occasions. Noted particularly for his care for the sick, he ministered to Catholics in a time of prolonged persecution. We ask him for the grace not only to be faithful to our baptismal calling but to act with courage and perseverance, whatever the cost. We do not live in an age of persecution. In fact, some would call it an age of indifference as fewer people align themselves with mainline churches. However, it would be better to think of it as an age of searching and an age of fear of commitment because of the uncertainties of life. Although we are not called to proclaim our faith on street corners, we are called to show a steadfast commitment to our faith. If our commitment is seen as something joyful, worthwhile, compassionate, kind and caring, we will encourage others to want to join us. John Southworth lived for 36 years not knowing if or when he might be arrested. Not only did he trust fully in God but he would have lived one day at a time and made the most of that time. Let us live our days as a blessing, with gratitude and with joy.

John Southworth reveals his courage and steadfast trust in God in this quote: *I was brought up in the truly ancient Roman Catholic apostolic religion, which taught me that the sum of the only true Christian profession is to die. This lesson I have heretofore in my lifetime desired to learn; this lesson I come here to put into practice by dying, being taught it by our Blessed Saviour, both by precept and example. To follow His holy doctrine, and imitate His holy death, I willingly suffer at present; these gallows I look on as His cross, which I gladly take to follow my dear Saviour.*

Catching your eye

A man sees a beautiful woman sitting at a restaurant, eating, alone, at the table next to his. Suddenly, she sneezes and a glass eye flies out of its socket! With his lightening fast reflexes, as it hurtled past the man, he catches it in mid-air and hands it back to the lady. "This is so embarrassing!" She says. "Let me at least buy you dinner to make up for it!" So, they have dinner together. The lady is warm, charming and very pleasant. She is a great conversationalist and they end up having a lot in common. As the man is leaving, he says to her, "You are an exceptionally charming woman!" He says. "Are you normally this nice to everyone you meet?" "No," she replies. "You just happened to catch my eye!!!"