

Reflection Saturday Week 16 – St James, Apostle 2020

It seems that you can pay over £4,000 for some rare earthenware jars. St Paul, however, wants us to recognise the importance and value of what lies in the jar which for us is the power and presence of God, of Jesus Christ. A content that is invaluable. St Paul also encourages us to face up to the challenges and difficulties of life with courage and confidence. Confident that we do not face them alone. Although James and his brother John asked for seats next to Jesus in his kingdom, James was one of the early martyrs as the first bishop of Jerusalem. Later he became linked with Compostela in Spain and an end point of many pilgrim routes across Europe. Pilgrims can face many different challenges on route but find strength and encouragement in each other as well as the Holy Spirit who travels with them. Today we are reminded that we are a pilgrim people, not on a journey for its reward or its achievement but a journey of discovery and wonder. Listen to this commentary on chapter 7 of *Lumen Gentium*, from the Second Vatican Council, which is a chapter on the Church itself as pilgrim.

*It would be fairly traditional for Catholics to say that we are all, by our baptism, pilgrims on a journey, hoping to achieve our final destiny to be in eternal communion with God for all eternity. This has always been a teaching of the Church and it remains true now. But Vatican II did not just say that we are a Church of pilgrims; it said that we are a **Pilgrim Church**. The Church itself is on the way. It has not arrived. In *Lumen Gentium*, the Council claims that the Church “will not achieve its perfection until the end of history.” The implications of that one line are immense, because it tells us that the Church is not perfect. If the Church is not perfect, then there is a need for change and reform. As one of its pilgrims we can, each of us and together, make it a more welcoming, a more supportive, a more caring, a more loving home of God open to all without exception.*

Further thoughts

Dalai Lama If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito.

Lucille Ball The secret of staying young is to live honestly, eat slowly, and lie about your age.

Ron White I believe that if life gives you lemons, you should make lemonade... And try to find somebody whose life has given them vodka, and have a party.