

Reflection Tuesday Week 32 St Leo the Great 2020

St Leo the Great was born in Etruria and became Pope in 440. He was a true shepherd and father of souls. He constantly strove to keep the faith whole and strenuously defended the unity of the Church. He repelled the invasions of the barbarians or alleviated their effects, famously persuading Attila the Hun not to march on Rome in 452, and preventing the invading Vandals from massacring the population in 455. Leo left us many doctrinal and spiritual writings. He died in 461.

The words of the Psalmist could not have been truer about Pope Leo: *The just man's mouth utters wisdom and his lips speak what is right; the law of his God is in his heart; his steps shall be saved from stumbling.* A true follower of Christ is not just someone who understands and knows the faith but the person who is able to live that faith in every area of their lives. This is who Leo was, a father and shepherd of souls. He risked his life for his people against all the odds and God blessed and rewarded that faith not for St Leo but for the people he protected and served. The story of the last judgement in the Gospel reminds us very clearly that on the day of judgement we will not be asked about what we know or for erudite explanations of the faith. There will be one question: *How did you live your life?*

- Be enlightened by his Pope Leo's wisdom:
- *Virtue is nothing without the trial of temptation, for there is no conflict without an enemy, no victory without strife.*
- Those who are not good to others are bad to themselves.
- *Peace is the mark of the children of God. Peace is the nurse of love. Peace is the mother of unity. Peace is the rest of the blessed souls. Peace is the dwelling place of eternity.*
- The cross of Christ is the true ground and chief cause of Christian hope.
- *The faith of those who live their faith is a serene faith. What you long for will be given you; what you love will be yours for ever.*
- The birthday of the Lord is the birthday of peace.

Shepherds . . .

- **Red sky at night; shepherds delight, red sky in morning; shepherds warning;**
Minced lamb, potato, onion and carrot; shepherd's pie.
- **Did you hear about the shepherd that retired to the Pacific Northwest?**
He was sheepless in Seattle.