

Reflection Saturday Easter Week 6 – 2021

Following the gospels over recent weeks, it is obvious that the relationship Jesus had with his Father was central to his whole life and that it was a relationship of love. Speaking to his disciples at the Last Supper, Jesus wanted his disciples to develop their relationship with the Father through him. *I and the Father are one*, he says confidently and lovingly. Jesus also recognises that, in order to have a deep relationship with the Father, they would need help, the help of the Holy Spirit which he promises to send them.

This helps us understand why we become temples of the Holy Spirit in baptism. It is also why when asked to teach his disciples about prayer Jesus' first words were **Our Father** . . . and why we hear him say that, *"The Father loves you for loving me and believing that I came from God."* **A sonnet on the Our Father** (Malcolm Guite):

I heard him call you his beloved son
and saw his Spirit lighten like a dove,
I thought his words must be for you alone,
knowing myself unworthy of his love.
You pray in close communion with your Father,
so close you say the two of you are one,
I feel myself to be receding further,
fallen away and outcast and alone.

And so, I come and ask you how to pray,
seeking a distant supplicant's petition,
only to find you give your words away,
as though I stood with you in your position,
as though your Father were my Father too,
as though I found his 'welcome home' in you. **And**

Our Father opened up a garden, a garden in our hearts.
He planted all good things in it that gave our lives their start.
He turned us to the sunshine and encouraged us to dream.
Fostering and nurturing the seeds of self-esteem.
And when the winds and rain came, he protected us enough.
But not too much because he knew that we'd stand strong and tough.
He inspired others to teach us the right from the wrong.
Markers for our pathway that will last a lifetime long.
We are our Father's garden; we are his legacy.
He sent us Jesus his Son, to come and set us free.

After mowing the lawn with his six-year-old son Jeff, a married pastor decided to spend a little time with him, so they crawled on to the family's trampoline and gazed up into the sky. With a puzzled look, Jeff asked *"Dad... Why are we here?"*

The pastor took the opportunity to explain how we are children of our Father in Heaven, how he has sent us here because he loves us and wants us to experience the things he has created for us, how he wants us to serve one another, to learn, to grow and to develop those qualities that will allow us to return to live with Him some day. Pausing, he asked if he had answered the question, Jeff replied, *"Not really"*. After a short pause, Jeff again asked, *"Dad ... Why are we here?... Weren't we supposed to pick Mom up an hour ago?"*