

Reflection Wednesday Week 33 St Hugh of Lincoln 2021

Recognising our gifts is important if we are to use them wisely and generously. As with all Gods gifts to us, which are many, they are of no value unless we use them in the service of others. To do this well we depend on the Holy Spirit to guide us. This demands trust and courage and an overall desire to be of service to others as Jesus was in his day. Pope Francis obviously recognised this when he invited us to realise that we journey together in a synodal process. He is encouraging you and all the lay-faithful to share their experience of faith in all its joys and challenges, successes and failures. To discover better your inner gifts, your shared solidarity, your strengths and weaknesses, all of which will help as we journey together more confidently and with a deeper realisation of Church. The hope is that the importance, foundational presence and magnificence of the lay-faithful in the life and growth of the Church will become more evident, and that we realise we are the kingdom of God here on earth. As we journey together, keep this Psalm prayer alive in your hearts: *"I kept my feet firmly in your paths; there was no faltering in my steps. I am here and I call, you will hear me, O God. Turn your ear to me; hear my words."* (Ps16/17)

An old man had to carry a heavy bundle of sticks for many miles through harsh terrain. After many days, he could bear it no longer. His feet were blistered, his throat dry, and he could no longer move. In his misery, he called for Death.

Death appeared clad in a black robe and carrying his scythe. The old man fell to his knees. *"Thank you so much for coming to me in my time of need!"* He cried with joy.

"You can help me carry these sticks!"