

Reflection Friday Week 26 St Jerome 2022

St Jerome (340 - 420) was born in Strido, Dalmatia. He studied in Rome and was baptized there. Attracted by the ascetic life he travelled to the East, where he was (unwillingly) ordained a priest. He was recalled to Rome to act as secretary to Pope Damasus, but on the Pope's death he returned to the East, to Bethlehem, where (with the aid of St Paula and others) he founded a monastery, a hospice, and a school, and settled down to the most important work of his life, the translation of the Bible into Latin, a translation which, with some revisions, is still in use today. He wrote many works of his own, including letters and commentaries on Holy Scripture. During the barbarian invasions and internal dissension in the Church, he helped the refugees and those in need. He died in Bethlehem.

Like St Paul, Jerome believed that *all scripture is inspired by God and can profitably be used for teaching, for refuting error, for guiding people's lives and teaching them to be holy.* Matthew reminds us that scripture is full of treasures, wisdom and the knowledge of God. However long we reflect on them there will still be much more to discover and learn. Maybe this is why heaven is an eternity, for even that will not be enough.

*"You are writing a Gospel,
a chapter each day,
by deeds that you do,
by words that you say.*

*People read what you write,
whether faithless or true;
say, what is the Gospel
according to you?" Paul Gilbert*

St Jerome:

- *When we pray we speak to God; but when we read, God speaks to us.*
- *Make knowledge of the Scriptures your love ... Live with them, meditate on them, make them the sole object of your knowledge and inquiries.*
- *Be ever engaged, so that whenever the devil calls, he may find you occupied.*
- *So valuable to heaven is the dignity of the human soul that every member of the human race has a guardian angel from the moment the person begins to be.*