

Thought for the Day – Sunday 22 March 2020

There is a famous Chinese proverb which says “May you live in interesting times.” While seemingly a blessing, the expression is, in fact, part of a trio of curses; life is so much better for us when we live in “uninteresting times”, in times of peace and tranquillity, rather than in “interesting” ones, which are usually times of trouble.

Well, we are facing “interesting times” at the moment. It is somewhat ironic that today is known as *Laetare* Sunday, from the first line of the Entrance Antiphon: “Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her.” We may ask what there is to rejoice about! We are like those weary Israelites in the desert, hungry for food. Granted, we may not be physically hungry, but we hunger for the Lord. We no longer regularly enjoy the Manna from Heaven, the Bread of Life. We no longer have access to the ‘Source and Summit of our Christian Life’, as the Second Vatican Council puts it.

Yet our Lord has not abandoned us.. far from it! Christ is still the same, today, tomorrow, and forever. He is the Good Shepherd, watching over a dispersed flock. Today’s famous Psalm (22), reminds us that there is nothing we shall want. He revives our drooping spirits. His crook and staff give us comfort. Our heads have been anointed with oil – literally, at our Baptism, and figuratively, through the graces we receive from him, like young David in our First Reading.

He is the chosen of the Lord, the most unlikely of future kings, anointed by Samuel. It is clear that God’s ways are not our ways, and we cannot see ‘the whole picture’, like the blind man in our Gospel, who goes to wash in the Pool of Siloam, and is healed by the loving touch of Jesus. Through Him, we are ‘light in the Lord’, as St. Paul reminds us in his Letter to the Ephesians, and the effects of this light are seen in “complete goodness and right living and truth”. St. Paul continues: “Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast”.

This is OUR mandate, during this period when we are bereft of the Eucharist. We are to live our lives as ‘children of light’, the beloved of the Father. May we remain spiritually alert, and vigilant in our faith through these coming weeks, because “Christ will shine on you.” When we all come together again, it will indeed be a great day of rejoicing!