

## **Lent 2 year B 2018**

It's awful isn't it, this scandal at Oxfam where some of their workers in Haiti during the earthquake relief a few years ago really abused their status through their bad behaviour. It really taints the good work Oxfam do. Our charity organisation Cafod, has written to tell us that they have zero tolerance for such behaviour and that their policy is to deal transparently with any accusation.

You feel for all those who have been donating over the years - by standing order for instance. I'm sure they feel that their love and generosity has been betrayed. We hear in fact, that over 7000 people have cancelled their standing orders.

I pay a standing order, though to a different charity and like anybody else, I don't really know what's going on; I just trust that when the money leaves my bank account each month that it's doing some good.

But actually that's not quite true because every now and then I do get a glimpse of the good it does-a report, a letter, a picture, whatever, and that glimpse is enough to reassure me and allow me to trust in the meantime. But I do need these occasional glimpses.

We all do in fact and Jesus's disciples did too. They needed the odd glimpse, and the Transfiguration was just such a glimpse. They didn't know what was going on most of the time, they didn't know exactly who and what Jesus was, or what he was up to but they trusted him and every now and then they got a glimpse of reality or truth and they had clarity.

Most of the time though there was a cloud of unknowing around Jesus. There were doubts and there was confusion; there was a mist, there was a bit of a fog. But every now and then, like in the Transfiguration, they could see the truth about him and his relationship to the father. It was enough for them. But there was a lot that they were going to have to trust about him in times to come.

And for us too in our relationship with God and in our journey with Jesus there has to be a lot of trust and faith and we need our moments of clarity and reassurance as well. Much goes on in our lives and we place our trust in God but every now and then there is a glimpse, an opening in the cloud. Someone says or does something, or a phrase or word from the readings just hits home or strikes a chord and we know that we are doing the right thing, going the right way, or perhaps we realise that we need to make a slight course adjustment. It's useful to record these moments, phrases, words, sentences, whatever and that's why we have offered you the Lenten prayer journal. It can be really helpful.

You might actually remember events or times in your life from the past when you enjoyed such clarity of vision. I for instance, can remember being on my sabbatical break just over a year ago and I was in a place or a groove where everything just made total sense. A few months back in Catford and I was all muddled again of course – no, not really, you don't lose such conviction very easily and that's the point. I'm sure Peter, James and John were clinging on to their moments on Mount Tabor during the night that Jesus was taken from them and tortured to death.

But God gives all of us these moments or times of this particular grace-this conviction, this clarity of vision where we can glimpse God as he is and ourselves as we are. We should feel free and able to pray for such graces but we should also stay awake and keep our eyes open so that we can recognise such graces when they are given to us.

So again I commend to you the practice of writing things down- "journalling" is the phrase and that's why we produced the Lenten journals. If you didn't take one or start using one last week then this week is just fine! Let God speak to you and write down the thoughts or phrases that strike you.

And if you didn't make a Lenten promise last week then the cards are then again today. We ask you to promise to spend some quality time with someone during the week-someone you know or someone you don't know.

Look at the Lenten Cross as it is today - full of promise. There's an awful lot of quality time promised in sacrifice to others. There is a great deal of love that between us we are sacrificing in union with Jesus.