

“..a curse on the man who puts his trust in man..a blessing on the man who puts his trust in the Lord..”

..the parting of the ways initially came in the garden of Eden, when man [Adam] put his trust in woman [Eve] & ate the forbidden fruit..when the Lord had put his trust in them both, given them both every freedom, every tree in creation, save for one..

..& still we have that figment in our imagination..a pigment in what would otherwise be the pure gold of an innocence of conscience, that idolises fantasises over the taste of that fruit of the one tree denied us..& don't we know from experience what a disappointment what a sour taste it always always leaves in us..

for our own independence & foolishness when we too, like Adam & Eve, were offered an eternal relationship, a co-dependency with God “to be like God”..to be immortal..& instead we chose..we still choose..to self infect with the deadliest super variant called sin & its high mortality rate..let us approach Our Lord for his mercy & compassion..as he whispers..”of course I want to..be cured”

“..if good comes, he/we have no eye for it”..

; Lord have mercy

“..he/we settle in the parched places of the wilderness”..

; Christ have mercy

“..whose hearts turn from the Lord”..

; Lord have mercy

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins & bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.

..for those of us who like/rely/depend on a religion of clarity..black & white; sinner & saint; chaff & wheat; sand & rock..the 1st rdg plays into our religious childhood & playground of right & wrong, the carrot & the cane..fish on Fridays, Easter duties, & confession fortnightly same time same confessional box same list of sins & usually same penance..a soberingly clear delineation between curse, lists & numbers of deaths, a land/time/desert of aridity & barrenness..in contrast a land/time/orchard experience of fruitfulness & blessing..a nation in economic/energy poverty & a Catholicism asking questions on synodality instead of on emptying Churches..surely a land a religion a time of aridity & barrenness..our own spiritual energy crisis, where divine grace is on offer in super abundance, a free gift to us in the beloved, & we have lost the taste appetite for it..

we subsist on alternative means of energy, which lead us into inappropriate forms of dependency addictions & independence, all so far from the gift of divine co-dependency we are offered unconditionally each day..this morning, here & now“of course I want to.. be cured”..

story of a traveller crossing desert, miles of nothingness heat aridity & testing..on horizon he sees tiny speck..gets closer sees it is a person sitting next to a vat of boiling liquid on a fire..traveller watches intently from a safe distance; every so often man takes a ladel skims off surface of liquid in vessel..watches & watches..traveller goes up to man & gently asks what he is doing..man smiles knowingly “I’m skimming off the dross, the pigment, from this vat of molten gold until I can look into it & see the face of God”..you & taking a lifetime to gradually skim off dross pigment of our imagined image of ourselves we’ve been taught/schooled in, & tragically come to believe in, self disappointedly ashamedly, purveyors of forbidden fruit, sinners, dross pruned breaches discarded & destined for the fires of hell or at best purgatory..& Jesus still always whispers “of course I want to..be cured” ..when you listened to that gospel story just now was it any wonder you heard felt & owned the chastisements “alas you who are rich..alas you who have your fill now, alas for you who laugh now”..you self-referred to the guilt in 1st rdg to being cursed.. whereas God made us, in a relationship of co-dependency, to trust that eventually, however deeply & for however long a life of barrenness & emptiness may surround us..as beloved followers of his in his footprints & with his heartbeat, Gethsemane moments & Good Fridays are inevitable in a faith grounded on failure remorse forgiveness & redemption..we have faith in our ability to skim off dross each day, knowing in his time that we shall see God..see God in our own face..& that the fullness of that co-dependency will come when at last we shall look into face of person we find most difficult impossible unforgiveable, & see the face of God..& they say to us, in Christs name, with a whisper & a smile to die for “of course I want to..be cured..”

“happy you when people hate you, drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as criminal, on account of the Son of Man..rejoice when that day comes & dance for joy, for then your reward will be great in heaven”..now risk omitting the “will be great in heaven” & instead realise the joy & reward comes much earlier than heaven..it comes when you have faith enough to believe that the neighbour who you cursed or felt cursed by, is potentially the real presence of God himself, & the sooner you & they with your help begin to realise make present in a journey into shared co-responsibility & eventual co-dependency, the sooner you & they will experience heaven on earth..”the kingdom of God is among you”..”choose your friends carefully” is a familiar saying..& after our gospel & our musings on it now “choose those you curse & those who curse you” wisely

Hebrews 13v2 “do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers”

[& mercy to your enemies?]

“by doing this some people have welcomed angels as guests [& God in person] without even knowing”..

[6th Sun Yr C Lk 6;17.20-26]

..& as we lose confidence trust in a process of establishing truth over govt & civil servants behaviour in lockdown, when the report has been brutally redacted to keep the whole truth from us, do you ever wonder why our gospel reading has been redacted with verses 18 & 19 kept from us..be glad you can look it up & find the juicy bit kept from you..is it a curse or a blessing you may wonder!

“a blessing on the man who puts his trust in the Lord, with the Lord for his hope...”

..for Bishop Terence Patrick & all in our local faith communities who are immersed in this period of synodality, that their responses for the good of the Church & our Diocese may be guided by wise counsel & inspired by the Holy Spirit in growing the kingdom among us..

[in God I trust] ..I will not fear..

..for Abbot Robert as he travels this weekend to visit our Community in Zimbabwe, returning to them for a time of thanksgiving for the quality of the mutual co-dependency which grew him into becoming our Abbot..

..for our government & all politicians as they seek to re-establish the faith trust & confidence of the electorate; may any promises they may offer be based on the gospel imperative of the common good, & paramouncy of care for the vulnerable & marginalised..

..on this Racial Justice Sunday we pray for all who suffer discrimination, abuse or rejection because of their colour, their country of origin, or their status as refugees or migrants..

..after the feast of St Josephine Bakhita last week, patron saint of victims of human trafficking, we remember those in our locality who come from Eastern Europe to wash cars, who live in squalid conditions & under duress, to send their wages home to their families..

..for those wounded or broken by abuse within the Church & beyond, as we pray for the victims, & we seek restoration for the collective failure to protect the young within our care..for Survive in York who work with the victims..

..for ourselves, called chosen & empowered to go out from our growing & deepening faith communities with the be-attitude to convince others that Our Lord & our faith are alive & well..

..let us ask Our Lady, who put aside her own hesitations to respond with faith & attitude, to pray with us & for us..Hail Mary