



Something Different

This week we have some thoughts from Lindsey, from Barbara Hellicar and from Viv Todd

From Lindsey ...

Thank you for the invitation to share a kind of 'desert island discs' with you for this week's 'Something Different'. I begin with my favourite piece of artwork which was created by a very gifted friend of mine. The image of a woman stretched in sweet repose over a clock with the words from Psalm 46.10 – 'Be still and know that I am God' constantly remind me to rest in stillness with God. The centrality of the clock is a constant reminder of how easy it is to be swept along on the hands of time and reinforces the importance of allowing time and space to just be still with God. Enjoy....



This leads me on to my favourite poem, composed by Bishop Ken Untener of Saginaw following the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador in 1980. When we become too engrossed in the minutiae of work and life, this poem encourages us to take a step back and take a look at the bigger picture.

A Future Not Our Own

It helps now and then to step back and take a long view.

The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts,
it is beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a fraction
of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.

Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of
saying that the kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said.

No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession
brings perfection, no pastoral visit brings wholeness.

No program accomplishes the Church's mission.

No set of goals and objectives include everything.

This is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one
day will grow. We water the seeds already planted
knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.

We provide yeast that produces effects
far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of
liberation in realizing this.

This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.

It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning,
a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's
grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the
difference between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders, ministers, not
messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.

It has been difficult to choose my favourite verse from scripture, but I've settled on the following words from Isaiah (43.1-2) which can be seen on the stunning font in Salisbury Cathedral. In baptism we are born into new life, called by God, by name. As children of God it is a comfort to know that whatever we walk through in life, we do so in the company of our God who knows us intimately and calls us by name

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have called you by name, you are mine.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;

and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;

when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,

and the flame shall not consume you.

So my favourite hymn (or one of them) comes from my confirmation service back in 1982 when, as some of you may have already heard me describe, I knew that I was committing to a way of life that would change me forever. A way of life that would begin with baby steps, but always endeavouring to live out and share out the gospel:

We have a gospel to proclaim
Good news for men in all the earth;
The gospel of a Saviour's name:
We sing His glory, tell His worth.

Tell of His birth at Bethlehem,
Not in a royal house or hall
But in a stable dark and dim:
The Word made flesh, a light for all.

Tell of His death at Calvary,
Hated by those He came to save;
In lonely suffering on the cross
For all He loved His life He gave.

Tell of that glorious Easter morn:
Empty the tomb, for He was free.
He broke the power of death and hell
That we might share His victory.

Tell of His reign at God's right hand,
By all creation glorified;
He sends His Spirit on His Church
To live for Him, the Lamb who died.

Now we rejoice to name Him King:
Jesus is Lord of all the earth.
This gospel message we proclaim:
We sing His glory, tell His worth.

And to close I offer you the Methodist Covenant Prayer which forms part of their Annual Covenant Service, and in which I have been privileged to share over a number of years:

I am no longer my own but yours.

Put me to what you will,

rank me with whom you will;

put me to doing,

put me to suffering;

let me be employed for you,

or laid aside for you,

exalted for you,

or brought low for you;

let me be full,

let me be empty,

let me have all things,

let me have nothing:

I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things

to your pleasure and disposal.

And now, glorious and blessed God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

you are mine and I am yours.

Amen.

From Barabra Hellicar ...

Here are 3 snippets from "A White Candle", compiled by Mary Oakley, who started collecting quotations and prayers many years ago. These items were published in 1991 to help those who were growing older and were feeling lonely.

"Little girl after visiting an old lady

- if I could be as nice as that I wouldn't mind growing older.

- Mother: if you want to be that kind of old lady, you've got to begin now".

"Faith is putting your hand out in the dark and finding it held"

"My deafness I endure, to dentures I'm resigned, bifocals I can manage, but oh how I miss my mind."

Thought you also might like "something different". God Bless, Barbara H.

Or even without the comma, God Bless Barbara H.

Did U hear the one about the importance of the comma?

- It's time to eat, Granma or

- It's time to eat Granma!

From Viv Todd ...

I came across the song below, quoted in a favourite book of which is all about trying to live actively with the presence of God every day – something which sounds as if it should be so easy to do, yet somehow isn't! As we continue to adjust to not being able to do all the things that normally keep us busy, perhaps this is a gift to remind us to treasure even little, ordinary things as sacred. As George Herbert put it:

All may of Thee partake:

Nothing can be so mean,

Which with his tincture—"for Thy sake"—

Will not grow bright and clean.

(from The Elixir – and the hymn Teach me, my God and King)

Or in the words of another writer:

In His presence, live a moment at a time:

live that moment fully.

To try to live a holy life is to be crushed by the enormity of the task,
but a whole life consists of a series of such moments...

Amund Karner, in Celtic Daily Prayer

The song ... Holy as a day is spent ... is by Carrie Newcomer. You can hear her sing it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pxzO8DyY9e8>

Holy is the dish and drain
The soap and sink, and the cup and plate
And the warm wool socks, and the cold white tile

Shower heads and good dry towels
And frying eggs sound like psalms
With bits of salt measured in my palm
It's all a part of a sacrament
As holy as a day is spent

Holy is the busy street
And cars that boom with passion's beat
And the checkout girl, counting change
And the hands that shook my hands today

And hymns of geese fly overhead
And spread their wings like their parents did
Blessed be the dog that runs in her sleep
To chase some wild and elusive thing

Holy is the familiar room
And quiet moments in the afternoon
And folding sheets like folding hands
To pray as only laundry can
I'm letting go of all my fear
Like autumn leaves made of earth and air
For the summer came and the summer went
As holy as a day is spent

Holy is the place I stand
To give whatever small good I can
And the empty page, and the open book
Redemption everywhere I look

Unknowingly we slow our pace
In the shade of unexpected grace
And with grateful smiles and sad lament
As holy as a day is spent

And morning light sings 'providence'
As holy as a day is spent