

Reflections on Paul's Letter to the Romans 6:10 to the end and the Gospel of Matthew 10:40 to the end.

I wonder if you know of the Play "Waiting for Godot". It was written by Samuel Beckett and was first performed in Paris in 1953. In it, two tramps Estragon and Vladimir are waiting for a mysterious person called "Godot" to arrive. They have never met him but believe he can answer the many questions they have.

But despite very nearly coming, he never comes so at the end of the play, the tramps are still left waiting for him. As they do this, you could say that they are frozen in time.

Some call this a play where nothing ever happens. But the play explores the many thoughts someone goes through as they wait for something to happen.

Perhaps these thoughts help us as we wait for the Sunday when we can once again gather as a Christian Faith Community. We know that one Sunday this will happen so we are not like the two tramps in the play who are in a perpetual state of waiting. We are not doing our waiting in vain.

But to help us in our waiting times for when we do physically gather at St Giles, we need to keep on reminding ourselves as to what we are about on our faith journeys.

Our Reading from Romans helps us.

In it we see Paul advising a Christian Community in Rome (and so now us) "... put yourself at the disposal of God... do what is right..."

If we choose to follow his advice, then we can better put into practice what we do now and then when we eventually meet up Sunday by Sunday. Paul is reminding us that we are to be the body of Christ at work in the world.

This should remind us of this Prayer by St Teresa of Avila (1515-1582):

'Christ has now no body on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which to look at Christ' compassion to the world, yours

are the feet with which he is to go about doing good, and yours are the hands with which he is to bless us now.'

Perhaps we can sum up all Paul says in this way, "What does our faith journey expect of us in any given situation?"

This is a question we all have to answer and to acknowledge our many mistakes in doing this. Perhaps one way we can do this is to meditate on these words from the Lord's Prayer ... "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done..." This should lead us into this question. "Are we using our God given talents for God's purposes or not?"

Well, tomorrow the Church can celebrate the lives of two people who did these things after some awful and dreadful starts- St Paul and St Peter.

For a while Paul (then named Saul) chose to persecute the fledgling Christian Communities. But in time he literally came to see that his God given task was to promote and encourage them.

And as for St Peter, you could say that for a while he was a serial denier of Christ. But in the end, he came to see that Jesus was who he said he was and so willingly did great things for him.

Their lives have obvious lessons for us.

But we are not yet physically able to gather at Church Sunday by Sunday and we also don't know what a new normal Sunday will look like. So our Second Reading also gives us more advice what to do in our current waiting times.

Matthew 10.22 reads: 'And if anyone gives a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, he will certainly not lose his reward.'

And this should remind us of Matthew 25.40, 'And the King will answer, - I tell you this, anything you did for my brothers here however humble, you did for me.'

But perhaps the best advice for us to follow in our waiting times are these words of St David when he said at the end of his life:

‘Rejoice. Hold fast to the faith, and remember to fulfil those small tasks that you have learned while you were with me.’

This is good advice and it reminds me of this saying

“A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step.’

And I am sure that thought does not appear in the play “Waiting for Godot”!

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