



St Mary the Virgin Baldock

“Building with Christ”



Rector's Blog – Day 50

Dear Friends

Some verses from Psalm 104 (I would like to have included more verses but this gives a snapshot).

*25 People go forth to their work ♦
and to their labour until the evening.*

*26 O Lord, how manifold are your works! ♦
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.*

*29 All of these look to you ♦
to give them their food in due season.*

*32 When you send forth your spirit, they are created, ♦
and you renew the face of the earth.*

We use some of these words at Evening Prayer at the moment as we prepare to celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the disciples at Pentecost and as we ask to be aware of the presence of the Spirit in our own lives. It's important to note that today's reading is a Psalm of praise from the Old Testament, written long before Jesus was born. The Holy Spirit is God present on earth from the beginning of creation. Indeed verse 32 implies that the Spirit is involved in creation. A renewing presence. A transforming presence. A creative presence.

It's a psalm full of activity. There's verses and verses about God's activity in creating the world from hills and valleys to wild goats and lions. And then there is verse 25 (copied above) which hallows the role of human labour. We are not meant to be idle. We are made in the image of God and given a role, a meaning which is also in his image, that of orientating our lives towards God (see verse 29), again copying what the Holy Spirit does. Indeed Christians would say that the Spirit inspires and directs us in what we do, and encourages us to be creative and positive in our role in the world.

What this says to me is that there is a big role for human invention and skill in all of this. The things that human beings create, are (almost) invariably positive. It's just the way that we use them that is so dangerous. When Nobel invented Dynamite it was a positive invention. It allowed greater mining capacity. It's just human beings who use it so often for destructive ends. Perhaps verse 32 is a guide to deciding whether our daily actions are positive or not? Do they help to renew the face of the earth or destroy it? Perhaps it's worth asking to be open to the Holy Spirit to help us decide? Because some decisions are ambiguous. At the most trivial level, if I drive my car to Tesco so I can carry some extra produce to give to the FoodBank is that creative or destructive? Is it better to damage the environment a little bit and be generous, or to cycle and just buy for myself? And is the answer always going to be the same? Looking towards God and asking for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in questions like this (and others which are rather more i



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important) is where God's true creativity and engagement with the world flourishes. Perhaps verse 32 is a good verse to copy out and stick to your fridge!

Verse 32 also gives me hope. In the midst of pandemic and disaster, we have the possibility of the face of the earth being renewed through the action of the Holy Spirit. But if nothing else this Psalm seems to imply that we have a part to play in that as well.

A prayer

O King of glory,
send us the Promise of the Father,
the Spirit of Truth.
May the Counselor
Who proceeds from You
enlighten us
and infuse all truth in us,
as You have promised.
Amen.

A favourite Pentecost hymn to listen to (we'll also be singing it on Sunday)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zXO4rqBQOAU>

If you would like to join us for evening Prayer today (Wednesday) it is at 5.00pm

Topic: Zoom Evening Prayer on Thursday
Time: May 28, 2020 04:30 PM London
Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83409195631?pwd=bWNyZXV3VDZFLZUZXeIVvRVITQS9Odz09>

Meeting ID: 834 0919 5631
Password: 199986

The times for Evening Prayer for the rest of the week are
Friday 5.00pm
Saturday 5.00pm
Sunday Morning Worship and 9.30am and Evening Prayer at 6.00pm

Every blessing

Andrew