

'Thy Kingdom Come'

14th June 2022.

As a congregation at St, James' we have had booklets made available to us in a programme, designed by The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby. They have provided a welcome and very spiritual experience, meditating on all they contain. The clear purpose is what we are are being expected to consider this season.

Justin Welby reminded us that in this season between Ascension day and Pentecost Sunday we are invited to hold, as a focus for our prayers, a desire for a fresh out pouring of the Holy Spirit upon us, our friends and our church.

He explains that the Holy Spirit is 'God's promised presence with us, enabling us to be witnesses ourselves to the Heavenly Father's revolutionary love for us', first in Christ and then, in turn, to be a witness to Jesus, in the world. As he says these days are set aside for asking and searching for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

'Come Holy Spirit' is simply what we are asked to pray. The promise is sure. 'So I say to you, ask and it will be given unto you; search and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.'

Luke 11:9-13

The suggestion was that we pray this not only for ourselves but for five friends for whom it is the greatest hope and desire they 'might hear the call of Jesus and join us along the way.'

I made my list. These friends - and family, are so dear to me that I longed to pray, in this particular way, for them.

'Breathe on me breath of God'
Fill me with life anew.
That I may love what thou dost love
And do what thou would do.'

And so I meditated and prayed concerning these wonderful people in the hope that they may experience a reawakening of the Holy Spirit in themselves. To be ready, if asked, to be a fitting witness to Christ. To be open to them, that they themselves would become witnesses to your everlasting love.

As family and friends I have been with them at different times during this period.

I was prayerful, as I said, but slightly rocked when one began to question me directly!

She asked what belief meant to me. She found it difficult. Did I?

Another, was troubled and suffering he asked what I would do.- Well, he knew the answer I would give - Pray!. I hope I put it a little less bluntly...?
We talked about how God may respond, if asked.

Justin Welby writes; Suffering is an inevitable part of our lives. What Jesus has done for us does not guarantee us a pain - free life. But what His death does do is open up the door to us knowing and experiencing God's blessing, even - amid suffering.

On both occasions I was reassured of His presence, by the peace that seemed to settle on us, as we sat together.

I pray my friends will seek and recognise God's love for themselves.

'May today there be peace within'

St. Theresa of Lisieux

'O God, You are my God, I seek You,
my soul thirsts for You;'

Psalm 63:1

I continue to pray for my friends that they will know true and glorious refreshment.

Progress in our lives is so often measured in material success. 'an anticipation of the future is the breath of the Holy Spirit; the life of God's existence. It is the air which can only be ours because Jesus breathes on us.' writes Justin Welby.

'May I be your new creation and breathe life into those I hold before you' 'give me only Your love and Your peace'

St. Ignatius of Loyola

In the story of Pentecost we notice the Holy Spirit poured out on the community- yet tongues of fire separate out on each person.

Acts 2: 2-3

'The Holy Spirit is a gift, given to each one. He is given to each one so that they may be agents of good news to others.'

Come Down O love Divine
visit thou this soul of mine
with thine own ardour glowing
O Comforter draw near
Within my heart appear
And kindle it Thy holy flame bestowing.

Bianco Siena

What is it you really need? What do we ask for?

God knows our need and it is given to us by Christ Jesus, in His spirit. He gives himself!

'He abides in you, and He will be in you.'

John 14:16-17

AMEN

