

The Fifth Sunday of Lent

This weekend is Saturday the 28 and Sunday the 29 of March, beginning the Fifth Week of Lent.

The Community of Taizé sing *Christe Lux Mundi*: ?O Christ, light of the world, whoever follows you will have the light of life.?

This weekend?s reading draws a clear distinction, and on hearing this passage for the first time it could seem that St Paul was drawing an unhealthy division between flesh and spirit; the whole point of the incarnation is that that sort of distinction is wrong. Our flesh matters; the quality of life of each and every person matters because it affects their physical well-being and that is something that matters to God who took on our flesh. On second glance, however, it becomes clear that St Paul isn?t talking about such a division; instead, he is talking about how people choose to live their lives ? according to the flesh (the earthly, worldly way) or according to the spirit (the way of God). This weekend?s reading is from St Paul?s letter to the Romans.

The powers of this world pressure on us to conform to the values of the world. Are there areas of your own life where you are perhaps compromised and need to ask God to help you to distance yourself from the values of the world?

When we hear the word ?righteousness? we often think rather negatively, associating it with a phrase like ?oh, he?s so self-righteous.? In this sense what we are talking about is not a judgmental ?better-than-thou? attitude. Instead what we are talking about is pure and simple goodness ? or godliness. Do people see that simple goodness in you? A goodness which is prepared to think well of people of all types despite what the world might say?

As you listen to the reading again, try and listen to it in light of the words of the introduction, paying particular attention to the distinction it draws between the ways of the world and the ways of God.

We all have a vocation to show something of the goodness of God to others in the world. In these last few moments, pray that, the light of God?s love might shine from you and through you into the world around you.