The 24th Sunday of Ordinary Time 2020

This weekend is Saturday the 12 and Sunday the 13 September, beginning the 24th week of Ordinary Time.

‘Christ be near at either hand’. Let me make these simple words my prayer today. Let me know Christ’s presence in my life, Christ’s closeness to me in every moment of this day, and let me welcome that presence with an open heart. St Paul often seems so over-confident, but his confidence in God is not something he has created. At the time of his conversion, Paul was unable to help himself. It was this weakness that brought him to the Lord. As you listen to this weekend’s reading from St Paul’s letter to the Romans, put yourself with Paul in this gesture of faith and availability. No matter what, we are the Lord’s...

Romans 14:7-9

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

We hear a lot these days about self-help. Bookshops are filled with guides to achieve this or that target. People in the media claim that they are self-made successes. There are countless memes about ‘doing it for yourself’. Motivational speakers encourage us to be self-aware, to be filled with self-esteem. Perhaps you have engaged with a self-help programme? Did it satisfy or leave you wanting something more...? Perhaps it left you desiring God to step in...

Of course, taking care of yourself is a compassionate, mature, adult thing to do. But self-help is not easy. There is a phrase, ‘you cannot pour from an empty cup’. Have you heard this phrase? What do you think it means for you? Where might you be filled again?

As Christians, we are vessels, like those made by Jeremiah’s potter. Gathered and shaped, spoiled and made over by an attentive, loving God. Our life, and our death, are grace filled by the Father’s hands, given over by his Son’s death and resurrection. In all that we are, we are the Lord’s. Keep this in mind as you hear the reading again...

In my prayer, can I make this gesture? What might stand in my way? What help do I need from the Lord today?

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.