

My Dear Friends

All too often we are consumed by issues relating to the world in which we live and the trials and calamities that seem in a never-ending way to beset it. Christians are in the world but not of the world and on that basis, our thoughts and actions are of necessity to be drawn from that higher sphere to which we belong.

The Christian soul cannot by itself do more than witness the events that surround it on a daily basis, in a world that is fast changing, but it can through prayer to the Father be joined to countless millions of other Christian souls that are not only able to witness, but together and by the strength and grace of Our blessed Saviour, be empowered to "move mountains" if required.

We are constantly distracted by worldly matters and yet our prime duty as those to whom the Truth has been revealed, is to distance ourselves from the entanglement of the powers of darkness and move both our individual beings and, through communion with our Blessed Lord, people and obstacles that blind the world to the reality of its true situation.

Prayer, my Dear Friends, is the Rock upon which the future for the civilisation of the world as we now know it, will be transformed into the Promise of the coming "Kingdom on Earth". St. Chrysostom, speaking of the Excellency of prayers, says, "consider to what degree of happiness you are raised by prayer". Is the world a Happy Place at this time in its history? Think on that as you pray and meditate on its plight. We need no telephone or internet facility to communicate with our Blessed Lord, just quiet and concentration. "That which God has from all eternity determined to give unto souls He gives in time, by the means of the help of prayer".

For this reason Jesus Christ said in the Gospel "Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and you shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you: for everyone that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Matt. Vii. 7, 8.)

From this we can readily see the real need that we all have of frequent prayer, it is simply the channel through which Christ communicates His favours, assists us in our necessities and enriches us with His treasures. "A Christian", says St Francis, "ought to desire nothing so much as to obtain the grace and gift of prayer; for without this we cannot hope to be able to make progress in God's service; and with it there is nothing we may not promise ourselves".

We cannot make spiritual progress unless we embrace as the foundation of our own individual relationship with God, the dialogue that can only be exchanged by prayer, it is the means of substance and grace to the Christian soul.

As our Saviour taught us, so we are bold to say "Our Father..." The need of daily prayer and the discipline of setting time aside to be as it were to be at "at peace" enables us to unclutter our minds from the troubles and cares of the world, so we can focus on the reality of our relationship with God. I know that so many are confused, even frightened by the changes that are taking place all around us. Human faith placed in our political and judicial systems is being sorely tested and the feeling of frustration, even anger in our country's situation is becoming very evident.

The Christian Church is being viewed by many as ineffective and by many as irrelevant. A growing minority view religion as the cause of the misery that so inflicts the world. Well of course Evil distorts truths, undermines the Faith, and destroys spiritual Lives. The state Church has become sidelined in national debates, it has stopped listening to the Holy Spirit and moved away from the Higher ground, it has become immersed in the thorns and thistles of the hard ground. A ground so hardened by Evil, that nothing can grow; all in time must die and fade away.

Were we not warned in the parable of the Sower, what happens to the seeds as they fall onto the ground, it chokes out the word? Is this not the means by which Evil stifles the Christian soul, until it too dries out and withers away until only a tiny "fragment" of the true Faith is left standing. This is where we are today, we are being overwhelmed by the march of Evil in all of its many and varied forms, a sort of darkness is beginning to overshadow the earth upon which we all live.

Consumerism, Capitalism that is out of control is just like the dazzling of Evil, it promises everything, and for a short while delivers, but as the edifices start to peel away the reality of how those short lived promises begin to fade, what in reality is left?

Misery, Poverty, Destitution, War, Hunger, and in time pestilence and death. If you think I am being over pessimistic, then think again. Already experts are beginning to predict, food shortages, rising sea levels, pollution on a scale that we can only imagine. The western world is bankrupt and the developing world is starving, wars rage, innocents continue to die, how bad does it have to get before the world realises that this crazy situation simply cannot continue to go on.

So what of the future? Well it is in part in our hands, we know the "WAY" we know what we have to "DO" we know to whom we must "TURN" and we have been assured that "HE WILL NOT FAIL US". The Traditional Anglican Church has been so verily blessed by us knowing that He is with us. But it is a two way process, we are not here just for ourselves, we are not here for our own benefit alone, we have been chosen to make a real difference, not just in these Islands but in communion with our sister dioceses and Catholic Churches throughout the world, to help give the world a chance of Love and Peace, through Prayer.

We read in the Psalms, "Blessed be God, who has not turned away my prayer, nor His mercy from me" therefore we must believe for certain, that if God withdraws not from us the spirit of prayer, He will neither withdraw that of His mercy; and therefore, that His mercy may never forsake us, let us never leave off the exercise of prayer.

Let Us Pray:

Lord God, through whose grace Saint Gilbert enriched your church with a new order of religious life: grant us the same obedience to your will and openness to the needs of others, that all may gain the good things prepared for those who believe in you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

May Almighty God through the power of Prayer, reassure you with His presence with you, that His will, will prevail and that His word on Earth as in Heaven will be done.

May God Bless and Keep You all.

Yours In Christ Jesus,

Father Ian.