

Lent Reflection Week 6

John 12:20-21- "Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.'"

Reflection- Six words. Sir, we wish to see Jesus... Six words that struck me immediately when I read this gospel passage. We spoke last week of how John 3.16 sums up the gospel in so many ways and here in this passage is six words which sum up something of the core of my own faith. Canon John spoke about this passage on Sunday and described seeing, meeting, knowing and accepting Jesus as the stages of Christian life which inspired and encouraged me. Underpinning each of these stages is the desire to be near Jesus... to be close to him. The idea of Greeks... strangers... non-jews... foreigners wanting to see Jesus... desiring him. That also encourages me.

It's likely that you all may have heard the story of the young parson who discovers a brass plaque on the inside of his new Church's pulpit. Not visible to the congregation the parson was perplexed but he quickly discovered it to be a simple plaque which simply reads: Sir, we would see Jesus... Not a bad reminder for any preacher. Or indeed any Christian. Where do we see Jesus? I wonder where you feel you see Jesus in your lives? Perhaps you see God in the bright sunny day, or the daffodils... In the love shared between yourself and another person. You will encounter God in the scriptures... Seeing Jesus' life and finding the Holy Spirit working through you. You might see Jesus in the preachings and teachings of the Church... in the hymns we long sing to sing together... in the liturgy and spoken words we share.

The desire to see Jesus is one we should be cultivating. We should be going out of our way to meet with him, setting aside time to pray and read scripture... making space and time to find God in the world around us. We want to see Jesus. Of course we do... Jesus draws us to himself... During Lent we want to see Jesus Alive and performing miracles... shortly we will want to see him parade into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey... And in the following week we will see him wash the feet of the disciples, go on trial, be hung upon a cross, die and then be resurrected... We want to see Jesus.

Now I'd like to ask you where you think your non-Christian friends and neighbours see Jesus? Do they hold the same reverence for the created world, do they see love as something more than a bond between people? They are perhaps unlikely to encounter Jesus through the Bible and very unlikely to choose to listen to a sermon or similar though stranger things have happened! I imagine that they are most likely to see or encounter Jesus through you.

It's our actions, our love and our compassion... our choices and behaviour that will be the closest to Jesus many of our neighbours will come. We need to show them Jesus in our lives. This idea is a really challenging one... I for one know that I could certainly behave better and do better in showing Jesus in my life... Especially on a long day when I get cut up at a roundabout! 1 Peter talks to us about how people should recognise us by our love for one another... and for the world. How do you think we can better show Jesus in our lives to those around us? What different choices, or actions could we make? What words can we offer to those we meet to show people Jesus?

This week, the final week of Lent before we enter into Holy Week itself I feel very challenged by these six words. So my challenge for me, and my prayer for us all is that we can move ahead into this Easter season considering how we can best respond to the words: "Sir, we want to see Jesus." Amen.