

TRINITY NEWS

Easter VII The Prayer of Jesus to Abba and our Prayer-Pictures of God

The Andrews Sisters sang this song first in 1941 and I heard it when I was still very young, but I still know the tune and some of the words:

**Each day at eventide
When I seek haven from my daily care
You'll find me by her side
It seems so peaceful there
I kneel in my solitude and silently pray
That heaven will protect you, dear, and there'll come a day
The storm will be over and that we'll meet again
At the shrine of Saint Cecilia**

As an Anglican I don't invoke saints, but I do treasure sacred places that enhance our capacity to hear the "still small voice" within, the 'voice' of the Holy Spirit.

Levels of happiness have a lot to do with levels of compassion. Levels of compassion open the mind to fresh levels of creative imagination. Creative imagination inspires renewed hopes and dreams.

We have in John 17:1-26 the Lord's Prayer spoken by Jesus himself. It is longer than the Our Father that we use as Jesus taught us.

When John 17:1-26 is read in church very few people can follow the train of thought. Its theme is the linking of the mind and heart of Jesus to Abba, his Heavenly Father. We seek to touch the heart of Abba when we say "Our Father in heaven." But Jesus, deeply focused with eyes uplifted to the heavens, does not even then move his focus from those around him. His heart always includes us. From the tiniest child to those worn down by the years, he includes us all. "I pray not only for these (his disciples) but also for those who through their word will believe in me" (17:20).

i. What 'picture' am I conscious of when I'm praying to God?

ii. Am I praying to Father or Son or Holy Spirit or to all three? Leon Morris said once in interview to a biblical scholar who had stripped Jesus of anything Divine: "But who do you pray to?"

iii. How can I link my own "looking up" to God to the people-flow that is repeatedly present in my daily thoughts?

iv. We pray with Jesus to the Father through the Holy Spirit, but although the 'pictures' that we have may help us, we actually pray to Jesus or through him directly to the Father because we are a resurrection people praying to a resurrected Lord. We struggle to express our thoughts in prayer at times as Paul indicates in Romans 8, but the Holy Spirit intercedes for us in deeper sighs of love than we can ever manage.

It is a great privilege to pray to God but sometimes it doesn't feel like a great privilege when we receive our marching orders from him. The little boy who heard the words of the song about "seeking haven in our daily prayers", is still walking the road, linking people always in his cries to God like the Master who prayed for all of us while he was still with us in an historical sense. As our Risen Redeemer "He ever lives to intercede for us."

Bishop Arthur Jones

THIS WEEK:

Wednesday.

- Bible Study, 10:00am

TO PLAN:

TRINITY SUNDAY, May 22, 2016.

Single service at 9:00 a.m.



NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS:

Acts 2:1-11; Psalm 104 or Psalm 33;

1 Corinthians 12:4-13;

John 20:19-23 or John 14:8-17
