

Thought for the day – Friday 18th February 2022

by Revd John Ohen

Love your enemies.

Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect, says the Lord. (Matthew 5: 48).

It is always very difficult to aim for perfection, so it will be nice to excuse those who are not perfect. So not to be as perfect as our heavenly is an impossibility for people like me, but I hope to keep trying to be perfect. Although we are all called to “love our enemies “, but if we are to be honest to ourselves, this can be very hard for some of us.

We are all called to love our neighbour and our enemy, sometimes they are the same person. The temptation to nurse resentment, or hold grudges and even hate, can be overwhelming. Our vocation to love is precisely to do with those to whom we take an instant dislike, or for whom we have no natural affection for whatsoever. Tough message, tough love, radical call. God knows those things by which we are sorely tempted, to which we easily fail or succumb. The famous Dominican philosopher and theologian St Thomas Aquinas said that “Loving only our friends to the exclusion of our enemies goes unrewarded by God.” We are all called to be perfect like our heavenly Father. This is what we all should be aiming for in life to make the world a better place for all. (Matthew 5: 48). God loves the righteous and the unrighteous, God loves those who refuse to love him back. St Catherine of Siena once said that “For I created your soul with the capacity to love- - so that you can not live without love and that love should be our food”. God doesn’t just want to change us -- God wants to transform us into his likeness and glory. We are transformed by the Holy Spirit and the renewing of our minds.

PRAYER:

Lord, strengthen me in my inner being when tempted and help me to resist Satan and all his empty promises.

Amen.