

Thoughts on the Daily Word:

24th Week of Year. Tuesday 15th September. Our Lady of Sorrows. Readings: Hebrews 5:7-9; Psalm: 30; Gospel: John 19:25-27.

In 1965 I started work for the first time. It was in a department store selling curtains! I grabbed the first job that came along. It lasted for only about 10 months but during that time I was often sent out to deliver curtains in the Newcastle area. One day I was sent to Jesmond and passed the parish church of the Holy Name and then dropped into it for a quiet prayer. I was praying to know my vocation. Little did I know that one day I would be Parish Priest at that Church. I also dropped into the beautiful chapel of the Sisters of Marie Reparatrice with its perpetual adoration. Many a lunchtime I would sneak away to pray at the chapel. The quiet presence and the silence of the sister's prayer touched me deeply. It certainly helped me on my journey into a deeper faith and eventually into the priesthood. The silent presence of the Lord, that sense of oneness and peace I believe is the great gift of the Catholic faith. I have always felt that somehow the silent presence of Mary at the foot of the Cross before the horror of the crucifixion is at the centre of that experience. Many years later as Parish Priest in Jesmond I had the joy of knowing and loving the last, elderly, Sisters in the last small community. They were some of the most loving people that I have ever known. I have always believed that it stemmed from the foot of the Cross with Mary. Sadly, such communities of silent prayer are dying out, perhaps we should pray for their revival.