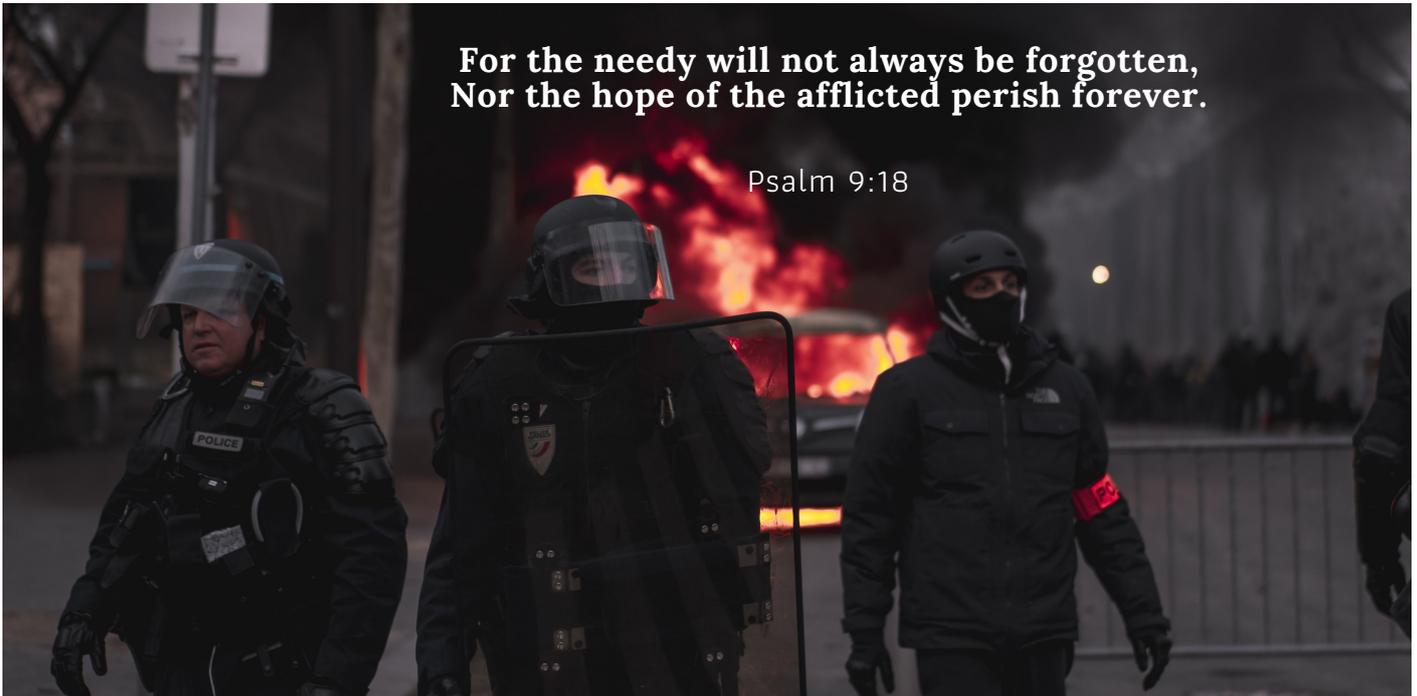


St Mary's Fortnightly Sunday School Newsletter



**For the needy will not always be forgotten,
Nor the hope of the afflicted perish forever.**

Psalm 9:18

WHAT'S GOING ON @ ST MARYS

Do come along on Tuesday 7th at 7pm for Evensong and Benediction to celebrate the birthday of Mary, God's Mother. The music will be more classical than normal with visiting singers.

A SAINT TO KNOW

On Friday 3rd we celebrate Pope St Gregory who in the 590s heard about this little country called England where there weren't many Christians and so he sent St Augustine of Canterbury to reevangelise this country. We pray for the rejuvenation of our Church.

DID YOU KNOW?

Where did 'peace be with you' come from? We say this several times during Mass. There are many references to Jesus using this greeting after his resurrection. This greeting is a translation of the Hebrew word, Shalom.'

HOW CAN MY PRAYERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

The world can feel like a really sad place sometimes, every time I put on the news there is some tragedy. A war with innocent people dying, a flood or hurricane destroying people's homes and lives or just hearing about the terrible way a group of people are treating another group of people.

We can be tempted to ask where God is in all this suffering and imagine that he has gone somewhere else and he doesn't care about what we're going through. This couldn't be further from the truth, Isaiah 41:10 tells us :

"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

He is right beside us hearing our prayers and our cries for help and promises to never leave our side, to give us everything we need to get through this life and carry us when we fall.

"And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him." John 5:15

Your prayers **do** make a difference, God is listening.



WHY DO BAD THINGS HAPPEN?

by Father Morris

It's quite difficult to control life, that which lives: read "Frankenstein", watch the "Jurassic Park" films, ask a parent. If God had wanted to control us, He'd have made us robots, not living beings with incredible capacity.

When our first human parents sinned, human nature was corrupted and our relationship with the earth was altered (read Genesis 3:14-end). A world that was created "very good" became flawed and we don't need our Christian faith to teach us that: see Tayo's article on the other side of this newsletter.

What's important about our faith though is that it teaches us that this world is fallen but not irredeemable. Enter God - who sends His Son to die on the Cross for the salvation of the world. Human beings are capable of great sacrifice and wonderful love. We'll have, I hope, examples of people who show this heroic virtue.

But to sort out the world's woes we needed someone who was both fully human and fully God: not just a superhero who could be a rival to our obedience to God, but one who was 100% human and 100% divine. This person is Jesus our Saviour.

The kingdom He ushers in begins to take root immediately and so Mary sings her wonderful song when she realises she is to give birth to Him: "He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts ... He has filled the hungry with good things" (St Luke 1:51-53). This is such an important text that the Church bids us say it everyday at Evening Prayer as we consider how God's kingdom did, should and might have broken in on our day.

We'll only really know how amazing that kingdom is when we're in Heaven, which is also when all the bad things will stop happening.

WHEN WILL THINGS GET BETTER?

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

This quotation from Galatians 6:9, is always a reminder to me not to give up, that good things take time.

Have you felt like you're doing everything 'right' but things aren't happening in the way you want. Or you've prayed to God on behalf of someone else and their situation hasn't changed.

Paul tells us in Galatians to keep going because there is a 'proper time' and I'm sure if you looked back now you would find so many examples of when God has come through for you and answered your prayers. So why would this time be any different?

Do not become weary, keep going!

KNOW YOUR SCRIPTURE

If you're waiting on God for something in your life, here are some great scriptures to reflect on and mark up in your Bible .

II Corinthians 5:7
For we walk by faith, not by sight.

Isaiah 40:29
He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength.

Isaiah 40:31
But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

Jeremiah 29:11
For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

T.H.I.N.G.S.

W.I.L.L.

G.E.T.

B.E.T.T.E.R.