

Our Faith

The Living Word of God

In a sermon delivered at St Peter's Basilica earlier this year, Pope Francis described the Bible as a "love letter" from God to humanity, and said that those who follow Jesus should read it daily, keeping the Gospel at hand "on our cell phones," being open to His word and not just going to Him with some "rote prayers."

"To follow Jesus, mere good works are not enough; we have to listen daily to his call," he said. "He, who alone knows us and who loves us fully, leads us to push out into the depth of life. That is why we need His word: so that we can hear, amid the thousands of other words in our daily lives, that one word that speaks to us not about things, but about life."

Do you read your Bible? Do you have a Bible? The Word of God is powerful! It changes lives and strengthens faith. If you don't read the Bible, why not start today with a chapter of St Mark's Gospel and read a chapter each day?

O Sing Unto the Lord

The final Sunday in October is often kept as 'Bible Sunday'. Needless to say, there are numerous hymns based on God's Word! *Lord, thy word abideth* was written by Sir Henry Baker (1821-1877) for the First Edition of Hymns Ancient and Modern in 1861, arguably the first true Anglican hymn book. Unlike later books, each hymn was given a title (usually a Biblical quotation) in this case a quote from Psalm 119: 'Thy Word is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my path'. The text and verses have generally remained unaltered to the present day, with each verse comprising double rhyming couplets: abideth, guideth; believeth, receiveth etc. Baker was not only a prolific hymn writer, also responsible for such great hymns as *Shall we not love thee, Mother dear?* and *Let us with a gladsome mind*, but was one of the driving forces behind the publication of Hymns Ancient and Modern. Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, he was ordained in 1844 and became Vicar of Monkland in Herefordshire, where he stayed for the rest of his earthly life. The hymn is usually sung to *Ravenshaw*, a shortened version of a medieval German tune, the simplicity of which allows the words to shine through.

Prayers to Remember

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Collect for the Second Sunday in Advent, Book of Common Prayer (1662).

25th October
2020

The Last Sunday
after Trinity
30th Sunday
of the Year

Two Commands



The Summary of the Law is one of the four texts traditionally given to new Christians, especially those preparing for Baptism or Confirmation. Alongside the Lord's Prayer, the Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed, Our Lord's response to the questioner's asking, which is the greatest commandment of the Law, is worth knowing by heart, and using regularly in prayer and meditation. To love God and to love your neighbour as yourself to the best of your ability, are two phrases from the Old Testament that sum up how to live faithfully in the ways of the Most High. Jesus' response to the attempts of the Pharisees to entrap him is rather to invite them to recall the heart of the Law and the Prophets. We are nearing the end of St Matthew's description of a series of public disputations between Jesus and the leading religious groups and philosophers of the day, but not before he asks the Pharisees a question himself. Whose Son is the Messiah? Quoting Psalm 110 back at them, Jesus shows that the Messiah is much more than a simply human figure, the Son of David. The Gospel will go on to show us, in the death and resurrection of Christ, that he really is the Messiah, the Son of God and Son of Mary.