

## Tuesday of Holy Week



Then God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and everything living around you and everyone living after you. I'm putting my rainbow in the clouds, a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.'

Genesis 9 v 12 + 13.

<sup>6</sup> Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. <sup>7</sup> Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

Phillipians 4 v 6 + 7

As you may have realised I like colour, which is one of the reasons that I like rainbows. They are so pretty and seem a little bit magical, suddenly appearing in the sky. William Wordsworth wrote a short poem about rainbows that starts:

My heart leaps up when I behold  
A Rainbow in the sky:

which I think perfectly expresses how I feel about rainbows. The other reason I like them though is that for me they represent the hope we are given in those two little verses from Genesis. God made a covenant with all living beings for all generations. The context of the covenant is of course that never again will God flood the whole earth but it's also set within the context of those who have been saved. God promises ultimate safety for us, and as Hebrews 10 v 23b reminds us

God can be trusted to keep his promise.

In the 1980s the rainbow was hijacked by the New Age movement and more recently Gay Pride has chosen it as its symbol which sadly has made some Christians wary of it.

Rainbow trivia – the Gay Pride rainbow has only six colours, each with a meaning attached to it, although as many as nine have been used. The traditional rainbow has the seven colours identified by Sir Isaac Newton but of course there are many more colours within the spectrum than seven. Tradition says that Sir Isaac chose seven colours to match in with the seven days of creation and the many other uses of the number seven in the Bible

At the moment rainbows are once again being used as a symbol of hope and safety with many appearing in windows across the country as a way of giving children something to look out for when out on daily exercise walks. This reminded me of something I devised several years ago when I was working with children to help them understand different types and ways of prayer using the colours of the rainbow. I set up a rainbow trail where the children learnt about the prayer, were encouraged to try it, and collected the beads which we made into a wrist band to remind them of what they had learnt.

Prayer is an important part of our relationship with God and just now is something that we can all do. I think that we often regard it as a last resort, something we do when all else fails or we have no other choice but it *should* be our first and automatic response to every situation. During this Holy Week I encourage you to spend a little extra time in prayer. You can pray as you take your daily exercise, as you work in the garden or house, you can pray at any time of the day or night – God will always be there waiting for you.

These are my rainbow prayers:

**Red** = repentance. Ask God to remind you of anything you have done that you have not said sorry about and then quietly tell Him that you are sorry.

**Orange** = offering praise. The Bible tells us to praise God.

'Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, my soul! I will praise him as long as I live;'

Psalm 146 v 1

**Yellow** = 'yo-yo' prayers. The children were given yo-yos to demonstrate that prayer is a back and forth conversation. We forget sometimes to listen to God as well as talk to him.

**Green** = gratefulness. God gives us so many wonderful things that we just have to say 'Thank you' to Him.

**Blue** = 'bread' prayers. In the Lord's Prayer we ask God to 'Give us our daily bread'. This is not just about food. We are asking God to help us and give us the things we need in our daily lives.

**Indigo** = intercession. This is about praying for other people and is probably the type of prayer we do the most.

**Violet** = vision. This is about asking God to show you something he wants you to do, give you a vision, help you to see. Sit comfortably and ask God if there is something he wants to tell you, wait quietly for an answer.

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