



I'm a pretty serious quizzer, and there's nothing I like more. The most frustrating questions are the ones which are deceptively simple but unless the answer comes quickly to mind, no amount of pondering will help. It almost seems as if the layers of knowledge actually block seeing what is blindingly obvious! Something like that may have happened with some of the hearers of Jesus. It just eluded them what he was setting before them. The learned and the clever can be earthly wise but heavenly ignorant, it seems. The children who are more 'open' get it. One of my pet concerns with the increasing amount of non-practice, among people who state they have faith, is that people are cutting themselves off from immense sources of consolation, grace, challenge, power and help. We used to pray, 'May the divine assistance remain with us.' What have we replaced it with? Google and AI?

Maybe it's a go-it-alone attitude that does the damage. This illusion of self-sufficiency – that by ourselves we are complete – blocks us from divine insight, and as we would often pray, 'divine assistance'. I once read this story about the Drogheda undertaker Paddy Townley. As he went out on a tough call with an overseas Doctor serving in the local hospital, the Doctor asked who was coming with them. Paddy was heard to quip, 'Just you, me and the divine assistance.' A very confused Doctor

And with your spirit.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins, ...

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.



GOING BY DIVINE SUPPORT

looked around and could see nobody and enquired where and who this 'divine assistance' was.

To underline the point, Jesus goes on to refer to 'yokes'. This was a beam used to harness horses, donkeys or oxen to pull a load – basically, a connection between two things. I would imagine that it was important to balance the pairing. Maybe to strengthen a 'weaker' partner or to balance the pulling power. In any event, the 'rest' Jesus speaks of, does not involve standing down but moving or plodding on. I always found with walking that an ideal walking companion was a rare thing to encounter. Some walked faster or slower, accelerated too quickly or too gradually, tackled inclines and declines completely differently. To encounter an ideal travel mate was sheer bliss. The

Communion Antiphon (Ps 33:9)

Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed the man who seeks refuge in him.

Prayer after Communion

Grant, we pray, O Lord, that, having been replenished by such great gifts, we may gain the prize of salvation and never cease to praise you. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

journey is achieved, but there is also a joy in the journey. You don't quit, you just belong together. A bit like the Lord can be in our lives.

Maybe we should be like the undertaker and say, as our ancestors would say, 'Bail o Dhia ar an obair' (May God bless the work) or the time-honoured prayer 'may the divine assistance remain always with us.' We were never meant, after all, to go it alone. ■

— Tom Cox



Reflection

Prayerfully ponder how Jesus desires his own union with God as Abba will be felt by his disciples.



Lesson

Jesus invites us to build his house of love on the rock of gentleness and humility.



Prayer

Jesus, may my labour always be inspired by your teaching and my burden be doing your will.