

## Resources

Pastoral Care Training Pack  
V3.0, June 2009

### Appendix 0.1 Generic Timetable V3.0

There is no ideal timetable: if we schedule tea and coffee before the start and then start with worship there is a problem; if tea and coffee takes place half way through it will always over-run!

However, here is an outline suggestion

Time	Activity
00:15	Refreshments
00:05	News, getting things out of our system
00:10	Opening Worship
00:40	Two Presentations
00:30	Response
00:05	Closing Worship
01:45	Unit

- The Hurstpierpoint Course omitted refreshments and substituted a mid 5-minute break for the five minutes of news etc.

## 1.7 Resources

1. [www.southwark.anglican.org/training](http://www.southwark.anglican.org/training)
2. Moulds, Tim: Scripture Readings for Unit One
3. Carey, Kevin: Key Concepts in Pastoral Care

### **Moulds, Tim: Scripture Readings for Unit One Version 2.0, 22nd December 2008**

Matthew 25. 31 – 46  
1 Corinthians 12. 12 – 27

Padma was carrying water from the well, in two large pots. Each pot was hanging from the end of a pole across her shoulders. One of the water pots had a tiny crack in it, and was weeping.

“I am such a hopeless pot” it said, between its silent sobs. “When we get home, Padma will empty me into the water tank, and I will only be half full. The other pot will give much more water.”

The pot was so ashamed; it could not even bring itself to say anything to Padma. But she was a sensitive person, and realised that the pot was unhappy. At home, she emptied the pot into the tank, and asked why it was so troubled.

The pot finally found the courage to say “I am cracked. I don’t carry water properly. I’m only half full when we get home”. Padma was genuinely surprised. “But I know you are cracked. I walk with you every day. Did you really think I hadn’t noticed? When we go to the well tomorrow, I want you to look at the path we take, and especially, look at the side of the path on the left as we go (the right as we come back)”.

So the next day, the pot looked at the dusty and dreary path ahead and on the right. It couldn’t see over to the left from where it was hanging. But on the way back, it was hanging on Padma’s right, as it always did. The path ahead was dusty, dry and dreary. But on the side, the pot could now see, the path was green with grass, enamelled with small, bright flowers.

In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul reminds us that we are not perfect. We cannot do everything. But each of us can do something. We have the choice, to do that something well, for the good of others. Or we can regret all the things we can’t do, and be envious of those who can do them. Or, perhaps even worse, we can be proud of the things we can do, and look down on people who can’t do them.

And so to the gospel reading, and another story.

Frank had grown up going regularly to church. He had obeyed his parents and was a responsible member of the community. He gave away a tenth of his income, to the

church and to the poor. He set time aside, every evening, to read his bible, and to say the Lord's Prayer. One day, as he prayed, a tramp came to the door, smelling of ill health and drink. The tramp asked for money. As you can guess, and as we would be tempted to do, Frank turned him away.

In two verses of that gospel, Jesus says:

"I was hungry and you gave me food,  
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,  
I was a stranger and you welcomed me,  
I was naked and you gave me clothing,  
I was sick and you took care of me,  
I was in prison and you visited me."

He constructs the story so that he says the same thing over and over again, four times in all.

The story comes near the end of the gospel in a sermon that Jesus preaches, just before his trial and crucifixion. It's sometimes called the sermon at the end. Right at the end of the sermon, he tells us this story, saying four times over, that we must respond to those in need.

Jesus says even more than that. When we visit the sick, the prisoner, the lonely, the stranger, when we respond to those in need, we come face to face with God.

After all that, we cannot reasonably say to God, "Yes, but what did you really want me to do?"

There are two practical points: they aren't in the gospel, but I am sure we all see the truth of them. The person in need will not look like Jesus. Certainly not like a shampoo advertisement, as some images of Jesus do. And their needs will not present at a convenient time.

One final thought about this gospel. Some of us will be thinking "yes, but what about the goats?" - "And these will go away into eternal punishment."

We think of this as personal, and after death. Think of it as a prediction about society. We, as a society, as a community, we must do these things if we, all of us, are to build the kingdom of heaven here on earth. And if we don't, we will build instead, a kingdom that is characterised by evil, neglect, guilt and suffering. A different kingdom here on earth, where we all suffer.

But let us end on that positive note: Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you ... I was a stranger and you welcomed me ... I was sick and you took care of me ... I was in prison and you visited me."

## Carey, Kevin: Key Concepts in Pastoral Care Final Version 3.0 20th January 2009

I am going to conduct a brief survey of all the major ideas in this course; and so we need to bear two things in mind:

- First, the idea is to get an overall picture, so don't worry about the lack of detail;
- Secondly, there is nothing I will say now that we won't hear in much greater detail later.

Necessarily, a lot of what I will have to say will be about definitions, the meanings of words but, again, don't be frightened by this, we can always refer back to the text and the definitions will be explored in other Units.

Definitions are important because they allow us to talk to each other in a common language, saving us the bother of explaining what we really mean every time we use a term. Some words, like ball, are easy and can be defined by a geometrical formula with Pi in it; but some, like heaven, are almost impossible; mine, I think, are all somewhere in between.

So let us start with the Ministry of Pastoral Care:

- Ministry is a posh word for service. Because we're British and have a thousand years of class history we find this word peculiarly difficult. In France or Italy, for example, being a waiter is an honourable profession but here that kind of "service" is looked down upon, it's the temporary position for students and those who can't do any better. But "Service" is precisely the word we would use for Jesus who was a "Servant", delineated in Isaiah 52.13-53.12) and then lived out in the Passion and Death of our Saviour. Jesus came to do something for us, to serve, to perform a service. So hold onto this idea, we are learning in this course how best to perform a service for others, to do something for them, to fulfill a need. What we are doing might, of course, fulfill a need in us and that is wonderful; but it isn't precisely the point. There may be days when we don't feel like serving anyone but the essential point is not our feeling but the need we have committed ourselves to meet.
- Pastoral is a lovely word which summons up, for me at least, those late 17th Century musical entertainments full of jolly shepherds and well endowed shepherdesses all getting ready for their rose bedecked cottages; but I am sure we are not taken in by all that romanticism.

Sheep are sometimes very self willed, knowing exactly what they want; and in this context, forget the idea of the flock as a working unit, something like the woolly equivalent of a bee hive; sheep, as a character in Monty Python once remarked can be very stubborn: "Once they get an idea into their head, there's no shifting it". So for us that will be something of a challenge if the idea that needs shifting does not bear much resemblance to reality. But the main point here is to think of the shepherd as a guardian and enabler, somebody who tries to do the basic, simple things well and doesn't over-

elaborate; I mean there's grass and water and there's grass and water; and the odd wolf; and that's it. Or is it?

- Care is quite a difficult word in definitional terms because, like love, it can mean all sorts of things from, say, medical care involving drugs, surgery and professional surveillance right down to having a vague regard for something or somebody. In this context it means providing a thing or a service - a chocolate or a listening ear - because we have a concern for another person both as a member of a community, recognising that human beings are fundamentally social animals and, in this case, a Christian community where we all live in the faith that we are each a child of God and a sister or brother of Jesus. Care, then, does not mean that we are emotionally involved with the person because that would imply that we can choose whom we serve on the basis of whether we care about him or her; care is independent of our personal feelings; it is a voluntary gesture made in love and respect.

Now let me quickly go through the main concepts that we need to think about in the next few weeks:

- Listening, far from being a passive activity where we just sit down and look out of the window or count the squares on the check table cloth, is an active but non directive process, it's about being alert to body language and voice tone, to the frequent contradictions between what people say and what they mean. It involves working out whether somebody simply wants to get it off their chest or actually is approaching, or is even in the middle of, a crisis. It involves immense concentration and patience because most of us usually concentrate on what somebody is saying just long enough to work out what we're going to say next! Our kind of pastoral listening is almost certain to involve long stretches of concentration with small, non competitive interventions from us to keep the narrative moving on.
- Comfort is a word that has got mixed up with things large and soft: toys, cushions, bosoms, chairs but the clue to the word is its second half "fort" which means something strong; so comfort is about giving people strength. We may find that saying the well formulated equivalent of "there, there, dear!" does give strength but don't depend upon it. Some people who lack self confidence will need a boost to take what is a perfectly reasonable action; some people, facing a dilemma, will want to explore both sides of an issue and will gain strength simply by articulating and, ultimately, solving their own problem; some people, suffering from grief or loss, will need an infusion of empathy and an enlivened vision of Jesus; some people will need more than we can provide. Still, having said that, almost all of what we do will be routine.
- Support can easily be confused with strength but what it means in this context is letting the person know that they are not alone; it means supporting somebody in the way we support a football team even when it's losing. People need to know

that we are there for them. Now in most of what I say I am emphasising our gentler, facilitating side but in this case people really do need to know we are there to support them; we need to say it.

- Walking alongside somebody sounds easy enough but, of course, it can be very difficult because people take unfamiliar routes which means we have to concentrate and sometimes they take a completely illogical route and sometimes they go round in circles; so don't be complacent about this accompanying role. There's something of a controversy in classical music practice about whether the pianist is equal to the singer; in this case, we're definitely low profile accompanists but if we don't play reliably the singer will find it more difficult to perform the song. The right note in the right place is a good start, under-stated playing, no pyrotechnics and the ability to bring the work to a quiet and harmonious end. And remember, the theologically posh word for walking alongside is *Paraclete*; I wonder where we've heard that word before.
- Refraining from judgment and counselling sounds easy enough but as we so easily fall into these modes, it's best to say just a word about them. Judgment is a very coarse process which involves looking at the evidence (primarily motives, actions and outcomes) and drawing a conclusion about the extent to which a person or a system meets its declared outcomes. In its crudest form, people implicitly accept the rule of law by being members of a mutually supportive society but when they break a law, somebody has to hear evidence and draw a conclusion. In another context, some people think it proper to judge people in a moral sense on the basis of their words and actions. In our case, there are two major considerations:
- First, if any kind of judgment is needed, it isn't ours to make because it isn't a component of the care we have undertaken to provide; even if we are party to huge amounts of detail about a person's behaviour, we will never know the whole story; but
- Secondly, as Christians we believe that it is not for us to judge; indeed, in the sense in which earthly people use the word, God isn't going to judge either; so as an idea about reacting to individual and collective behaviour, moral judgment is only of very limited use and tends to be over-used because to judge is to exercise power. We may, on the other hand, reasonably well assess how somebody might better achieve an objective that have set for themselves but any suggestions must be put in the form of a question, not a statement: "You might try this" or "You might think of doing it that way" are about as far as we should ever go. We are not an advice service but a listening service, an empathy service, a supportive service. Something may be so glaringly obvious that it would resolve a situation happily; but I say this in the knowledge that it's immensely difficult, still we can only ask a question or make a very mild suggestion unless, of course, our advice is asked for and then we must be even more cautious, not less. for our own integrity and that of the person receiving our

care, we certainly don't want to be held responsible for something on the basis of advice given in private. It is a sad thing to have to say but It's important that I do: people who need care may be manipulative and we have to be careful.

Counselling is a particular process whereby the narrative of the speaker is subtly orchestrated by the counsellor who, on the basis of an iterative inner process, modulates a working hypothesis and tests it by introducing new material or new routes in the conversation. It's a professional skill and we must keep away from it at all costs because unless we are trained to do it, we can't do it. We might all think that we could perform a cataract operation because it's so simple when we see it done; but, still, we leave it to surgeons.

Now I realise that this is a lot to take in; but a good deal of the course will be taken up exploring these issues and, in a more deliberative way, thinking about these concepts and how I have defined them. I would be very surprised if, at the end, we have not at least modified these definitions; but we had to start somewhere.

## 2.7 Resources:

1. Carey, Kevin: Listening: Lessons from Scripture
2. Moulds, Tim: Listening

### **Carey, Kevin: Listening: Lessons from Scripture Version 3.0 Final, 20th January 2009**

The Readings:

1 Samuel 1; Mark 7.24-30.

1. Both of our scripture passages are about:

Listening and changing our mind

The first is the more straightforward of the two: Hannah is upset because of her inability to conceive and her prayer becomes so emotional that it attracts the attention of Eli, the priest; but he is so busy with his own agenda, particularly with keeping order in the temple (not least because of his unruly sons), that he comes to the hasty conclusion that Hannah is drunk. She is then forced by circumstances to explain her behaviour. In this case:

She does not have a problem, she is the problem.

And

Instead of being heard she has to justify herself.

The priest accepts her explanation, blesses her, and sends her on her way; at least

He makes no promises.

In the second story, Jesus begins by appearing to behave badly. When the Syro-Phoenician woman brings her problem, his reaction is:

It's not my job/department

or:

You are the wrong category of problem for me

but, like Hannah, the woman persists, with some humility and humour, by 'bidding down'; she only wants the crumbs.

A call for help has become a negotiation.



Jesus then changes his mind. For our purposes it does not matter whether Jesus was testing the woman or simply irritated; the point is that he ultimately

Listened and adjusted.

In both cases something radical happens after the rather unfortunate interviews:

In the case of Hannah God directly intervenes

In the case of the Syro Phoenician woman God intervenes through Jesus.

## 2. Christian Listening

As Christians we are not exempt from any of the proper disciplines of good listening but we have an extra dimension to offer:

We believe that we are all children of God, created out of love.

This means that, as Jesus puts it: "The hairs of your head are all numbered: (Luke 12.6-7). This does not mean that God will 'fix' it. Today the term "listen" often means to agree or concur with, as in "The Government is not listening" means that it is not doing what I want.

When we listen we are not simply involved in a 2-way relationship but in a 3-way relationship where God is both 'listening' and is active through The Spirit.

Christian listening, then, does not invalidate secular ideas of good practice and neither does it remove the responsibility for self determination; We often think in a rather general way that God is with us but God is, in the 'person' of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, literally the one who walks alongside us; and this is an important point to take in at the beginning of this course because we are, essentially, committing ourselves to waling alongside those who need our care.

But there is a much more profound aspect of Christian listening which we need to absorb as part of the way we think about God. Just a few pages on from our passage in 1 Samuel there is the account of how the young man heard the Word of The Lord (1 Samuel 3). God keeps addressing him but, being inexperienced, he is not sure who is talking and mis-assigns the voice to his teacher Eli; but, of course, it is God who is actually calling him.

Now this presents us with a dichotomy: at one end of the spectrum we think that the idea is

Too good to be true

but at the other end we think that it is

Too difficult to be real.

This leads in the first instance to a trivialising of our relationship with God in which we attribute trivial successes and failures to divine intervention such as: "I couldn't find a parking space but I said a prayer and suddenly there was a vacant space". At the other end, the difficulty - and we will consider this in much more detail when we come to considering prayer - is deemed so great that we separate the prayer element of listening - or should it be the listening element of prayer? - from everyday life as something which is in a separate 'religious compartment'.

### 3. The Christian Pastoral Approach to Listening

You will be aware that I have just looked at two ends of a spectrum, so what is in the middle? Picking up the self communication of God, being on the right wavelength, is neither trivial nor impossible; it is, in most cases, intermittent and the result of a great deal of hard work. If we find that listening in the ordinary pastoral sense taxes our patience then 'listening' in the more profound prayerful sense will tax us even more; but, of course, the benefits are proportionately greater.

In thinking about outcomes, then, I want to consider Christian listening from the perspective of both the provider and the recipient of pastoral care in a Christian context.

#### a) The Carer

The general listener brings all her faculties to bear on communication so that the message is decoded as accurately as possible. The task is always to understand, as nearly as we can, the author's intention; but in a pastoral situation the author, the person we are listening to, might either be confused about an intention or might be saying one thing and meaning something else. This is neither sinister nor even harmful - in an effort to put someone at ease a person might say they are "all right" when they clearly are not - but in a pastoral situation it is precisely these conflicting signals that we need to be aware of. When we listen to God, however, we do not receive conflicting signals but what we do hear is a huge amount of static created by our environment; it's like listening to a radio transmission with a huge amount of interference; the source material is clear and unambiguous but stuff gets in the way. So from a pastoral listening perspective, we have to be aware of stuff that gets in the way when we are trying to listen to God:

- Are we persuading ourselves that God wants what we want?
- Are we using God to justify either doing something that is easy or something that is difficult? (this excess of sacrifice is not uncommon);
- Are we looking for an easy way out?

#### b) The Cared for

From the standpoint of the person who seeks our care, our listening is, in the first instance, a decoding exercise as outlined above; but while it is not our role to sum up like a judge, having heard the evidence, and draw a conclusion or propose a plan, we should be able to help our speaker to learn how to listen to God.

The last thing people want to hear when they are in distress is that they are actually better off than they think they are, but Christian listening does involve understanding the context of our earthly plights and dilemmas. Again, the key is integration, to avoid separating God's love from daily cares without giving the impression that God will fix it!

#### 4. Conclusion

There is, perhaps, a strange conclusion to this presentation. When Jesus was approached by the Syro-Phoenician woman he was too preoccupied with listening to himself, to the signals that said he'd had a hard time with the Jews, that he wanted a bit of peace and quiet in this alien place, that he just didn't want to have to do anything. Whether it was the humour or the pathos that prompted him, that flexed his consciousness, he reverted to type and picked up a clear signal from his Abba: "Stop quibbling and get on with it!"

**Moulds, Tim: Listening**  
**Version 2.0, 14th January 2009**

In pastoral care meetings, the main thing we are doing is listening. So this short section is me talking, mainly about listening.

We will cover other issues – confidentiality, and boundaries. And we'll touch on some of the things that pastoral care is not: it isn't counselling, for example.

**Listening**

Some times we really focus on listening. We concentrate, we do all the things we have learned about listening, from experience, from books, maybe even from training courses. And we listen really well.

But some of the time (most of the time?) we listen with less than our full attention. So this presentation is mainly to remind us of our listening skills, and of their importance. There are notes for you, as a take-away reminder.

First of all, **Non-verbal communication**

We know that people convey messages non-verbally. So, obviously, we have to look for those messages and understand them. But also, we have to be aware of the non-verbal messages that we are sending.

Eye contact communicates very intensely. We don't usually look people in the eye for long periods. It makes them uncomfortable. So we look at different points, mostly on the face.

Eye contact isn't always necessary. You may be able to recall an occasion where someone was more open with you, when they were not looking at you? Sitting diagonally makes this possible.

Eye contact reveals - general social confidence, but also confidence 'here and now' in this particular conversation. So eye contact may change over time, as a relationship changes.

Facial expression can reflect what someone is saying; but can also tell us about a person's mood, their health, their concerns. There isn't a simple code though; we can't say 'this face means this thing'. We have to observe carefully, all the time, and interpret.

People have different needs for personal space: like animals we have a 'flight distance' – if someone comes too close our instinct is to back away slightly; flight distance changes as we get to know people better.

Our Posture, how we hold ourselves, can indicate whether we are listening, bored, distracted, tense, and so on.

It's an obvious point, but if we yawn when someone is talking, they won't be very encouraged! It may be obvious, but we can probably all recall a recent example.

We sometimes hide behind arm barriers when we feel defensive; but sometimes crossed arms may simply be comfortable; some arm movements signal nervous or uneasy reactions.

Palm gestures: open palms can signal honesty, allegiance, or even submission; palms flat and down can signal authority – 'I'm telling you'.

We tend to be less conscious of our feet, so they can signal what we feel without us knowing it. When someone is talking to us, what are the feet doing? Where are they pointing? Where do they want to be?

To take all this in, to 'hear' the messages that are being signalled, we need to concentrate, with all our attention devoted to 'listening' in its broadest sense.

Active listening is mostly about concentrating, and keeping quiet. When people are trying to say things they find difficult, they may pause for quite a long time. In pastoral care, we can be ready to listen to longer silences than we usually allow.

**But active listening may mean asking questions.**

We should only ask:

- if the question will help the other person
- or if we really need to ask, to help us understand clearly.

Open questions: are usually helpful early on in the conversation. They encourage the other person to speak. Questions that start 'what' or 'how' are usually open. "What happened then?"

Closed questions: usually encourage short factual answers. They can be helpful to focus in. They can seem aggressive. "Did you go to the doctor?"

Testing-understanding questions: sometimes start with 'so ...' and may be linked to a summary. "So were you stuck there all day?"

Listen to yourself and others in the week ahead. Listen particularly for the 'testing understanding' questions. We like being asked them. They are respectful. They tell us we are being heard. They take the conversation on.

It helps to think about **Barriers**, the things that stop us listening well. If we are conscious of them, we can avoid them.

Distractions: feeling tired, hungry, thirsty, wanting to go to the loo, our own worries: they all make it hard to listen well.

Time pressures: will mean we are less likely to listen quietly and patiently; less likely to let the other person answer their own questions.

Speaking usually stops us listening. We want to offer our view, or the solution that has worked for us. While we are preparing our thoughts, getting ready to speak, we stop listening.

We all know that feeling judgemental stops us listening well. If we disagree with what the other person has said, if they make us angry, we don't listen well. If we just feel negative about the other person, we won't listen respectfully.

And now something for the over sixties - **Listening and remembering**

People will tell us personal details that are important to them. If we don't remember those details, it will seem that we haven't listened. Some of us will need to make notes after each meeting. We may need to write them down immediately after the meeting: if so, build that into your schedule.

And of course, keep the notes confidential.

And so, to **Confidentiality**

You have an agreement: anything said in the pastoral care meeting is confidential. You need to make this agreement explicit at an early stage.

But if you receive information, and you think it needs to be disclosed to prevent harm to someone, you should consider breaking the agreement. Speak first of all to Fr John. He will decide, working with you, what needs to be done.

You will (in most cases) want to tell the person who has given you the information that you have had to share it because of your concerns about harm. But if you think that will increase the risk of harm, say nothing until you have taken advice.

We also need to think about **boundaries**, what we can do and what we can't. What we will do, and what we won't.

We will not be counselling. The counsellor and the client have an agreement that together they will work to improve the 'health' of the client. That is not our job. Our job is

to be there, to be alongside the person. To be concerned for them, to respect them, to listen to them.

That careful listening is hard work. We can only sustain it for a limited time. So we need to think about our personal boundaries as well.

- How long will a visit last? How frequently will I visit?
- How long will I go on visiting?
- Will I only sit and listen?
- What will I do if the washing up needs doing? Or if I'm asked to go shopping?

We may find it helpful to talk about our own boundaries with Fr John. And we will need to be open about boundaries with the person we are visiting.

And finally, **Responding**

The gospels give us an example of pastoral care; it's demanding, but it tells us a lot. Think of the women at the foot of the cross as Jesus died. They could do nothing. They were just being there. It must have been unimaginably difficult.

There is a need in us to 'do something', to offer solutions, in the face of suffering. Towards the end of a meeting we may feel particularly, this need to 'respond', to offer a way forward.

Before we respond, before we offer suggestions, we do need to ask:  
Have I heard this person clearly? Have they been able to tell the full story?

And more negative questions too:

Am I irritated by them, or disagreeing with them? Is this solution one that works for me, in my context and with my strengths?

With all these cautionary thoughts, we may still conclude that we can offer a suggestion, a way forward, a response that really does pass the test: will this be helpful, now, to this person? And it can be offered in that spirit, with humility and caution.

But our final thought should be, that pastoral care is about being alongside people, and about listening to them. We aren't there for results. We are there, to be there.

### 3.7 Resources

1. Job's Comforters? Biblical Insights into Suffering and Pain
2. Joyce, John: Suffering and Pastoral Care (Tape Notes)

#### **Job's Comforters? Biblical Insights into Suffering and Pain**

What is suffering?

Passages for consideration: Genesis 3; Isaiah 52:13-53:6; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; 1 Peter 2: 20-24

Insights from the Book of Job:

The Book of Job.....

- Stops us from using one explanation of suffering in all situations
- Refuses to give an answer to the problem of suffering;
- Refutes the equation theory of righteousness =blessing and that sin=suffering
- Shows that God can be found within one's suffering
- Helps us to relate to God more honestly
- Helps us to pray more honestly in response to suffering
- Shows the inadequacy of human words and wisdom, and of glib theology!
- Shows us that often the best spiritual support and comfort a friend can give is to enable them to hear God speaking in the midst of their situation/or themselves.
- Affirms God's sovereignty in spite of suffering and evil in the world
- reminds us at believing in God and obeying Him doesn't shelter us from life's calamities
- points us to Christ, the supreme innocent sufferer, present to redeem; re: The Passion Narratives:

Job: Contents

1. Prologue (prose) chapter 1 - 2
2. The Dialogue (poetry) chapter 3 - 42:6
  - a. Job's outcry, chapter 3
  - b. The debate, chapter 4 – 31
    - i. First round: Eliphaz chapters 4 - 5  
Job's reply to Eliphaz chapters 6 – 7  
Bildad chapters 8



- Job's reply to Bildad chapters 9 -10
      - Zophar chapters 11
      - Job's reply to Zophar chapters 12 - 14
    - ii Second Round Eliphaz chapter 15
      - Job's reply to Eliphaz chapters 16 –17
      - Bildad chapter 18
      - Job's reply to Bildad chapter 19
      - Zophar chapter 20
      - Job's reply to Zophar chapters 21
    - iii Third Round Eliphaz chapter 22
      - Job's reply to Eliphaz chapters 23 24
      - Bildad chapter 25
      - Job's reply to Bildad and his final peroration chapters 26 – 31
  - c. Elihu speaks, chapters 32 – 37
  - d. Yahweh speaks, Chapters 38 – 41
  - e. Job's final response, chapter 42: 1 – 6
3. Epilogue (prose) chapter 42: 7 - 17

## The Book of Job (extracts)

### Chapter I

1 There was once a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. That man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil.

6 One day the heavenly beings came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. 7 The LORD said to Satan, "where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it" 8 The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil."

### Chapter 2:

4 Then Satan answered the LORD, "all that people have they will give to save their lives. 5 But stretch out your hand now and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face" 6 The LORD said to Satan "Very well, he is in your power; only to spare his life"

7 So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD , and inflicted loathsome sores on Job from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. 8 Job took a potsherd with which to scrape himself, and sat among the ashes.

In all this Job did not sin with his lips

11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all these troubles that had come upon him, each of them set out from his home – Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite. They met together to go and console and comfort him.

12 Then they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him, and they raised their voices and wept aloud; they tore their robes and threw dust in the air upon their heads.

13 They sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

### Chapter 3 :

1 After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. 2 Job said:

3 "Let, the day perish in which I was born,  
and the night that said,

'A man-child is conceived.,

11 "Why did I not die at birth,  
come forth from the womb and expire?

12 Why were there knees to receive me.  
or breasts for me to suck?

13 Now I would be lying down and quiet;  
I would be asleep then I would be at rest

### Chapter 4:

1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:

7 "Think now, who that was innocent ever perished?  
Or where were the upright cut off?

8 As I have seen, those who plow iniquity  
and sow trouble reap the same.

9 By the breath of God they perish,  
and by the blast of his anger they are consumed.

17 Can mortals be righteous before God?  
Can human beings be pure before their Maker?

18 Even in his servants he puts no trust,  
and his angels he charges with error;

### Chapter 6:

Job answered:

22 "Teach me, and I will be silent;  
Make me understand how I have gone wrong.

25 How forceful are honest words!  
But your reproof, what does it reprove?

26 Do you think that you can reprove words,  
as if the speech of the desperate were wind?

27 You would even cast lots over the orphan,

- and bargain over your friend'  
28 "But now, be pleased to look at me;  
for I will not lie to your face.  
29 Turn ,I pray, let no wrong be done.  
Turn now, my vindication is at stake.  
30 Is there any wrong on my tongue?  
Cannot my taste discern calamity?

## Chapter 8:

- 1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:  
11 "Can papyrus grow where there is no marsh?  
Can reeds flourish where there is no water?  
12 While yet in flower and not cut down,  
they wither before any other plant.  
13 Such are the paths of all who forget God;  
the hope of the godless shall perish.  
14 Their confidence is gossamer,  
a spider's house their trust.  
15 If one leans against its house, it will not stand;  
if one lays hold of it, it will not endure.

## Chapter 10:

Job answered:

- 1 "I loathe my life;  
I will give free utterance to my complaint;  
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.  
2 I will say to God Do not condemn me:  
let me know why you contend against me.

## Chapter 11:

- 1 Then Zophar the Naamathite answered:  
13 "If you direct your heart rightly,  
you will stretch out your hands toward him.  
14 If iniquity is in your hand, put it far away,  
And do not let wickedness reside in your tents.  
15 Surely then you will lift up your face without blemish;  
you will be secure, and will not fear.  
16 You will forget your misery;  
You will remember it as waters that have passed away.  
17 And your life will be brighter than the noonday;  
its darkness will be like the morning.  
18 And you will have confidence, because there is hope;  
You will be protected and take your rest in safety.  
19 you will lie down and no one will make you afraid;  
Many will entreat your favour.  
20 But the eyes of the wicked will fail:

all way of escape will be lost to them,  
and their hope is to breathe their last."

#### Chapter 19:

Job replied:

- 21 Have pity on me; have pity on me, O you my friends,  
For the hand of God has touched me!
- 22 Why do you, like God pursue me?  
Never satisfied with my flesh?
- 23 O that my words were written down!  
O that they were inscribed in a book!
- 24 O that with an iron pen and with lead  
They were engraved on a rock forever!
- 25 For I know that my Redeemer lives,  
And that at the last he will stand upon the earth;
- 26 and after my skin has been thus destroyed,  
Then in my flesh I shall see God
- 27 whom I shall see on my side,  
and my eyes shall behold, and not another.

#### Chapter 38:

- 1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind:
- 4 "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?  
Tell me, if you have understanding.
- 5 Who determined its measurements—surely you know!  
Or who stretched the line upon it?
- 6 On what were its bases sunk,  
or who laid its cornerstone
- 7 when the morning stars sang together  
And all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?
- 8 Or who shut in the sea with doors  
when it burst out from the womb?—
- 9 when I made the clouds its garment,  
and thick darkness its swaddling band,
- 10 and prescribed bounds for it,  
and set bars and doors—
- 11 and said, 'Thus far shall you come, and no farther,  
and here shall your proud waves be stopped'?
- 31 Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades,  
or loose the cords of Orion?
- 32 Can you lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season,  
or can you guide the Bear with its children?
- 33 Do you know the ordinances of the heavens?  
Can you establish their rule on the earth?
- 34 "Can you lift up your voice to the clouds,

- so that a flood of waters may cover you?  
35 Can you send forth lightening, so that they may go  
and say to you, 'Here we are'?
- 36 Who has put wisdom in the inward parts,  
or given understanding to the mind?

## Chapter 42:

- 1 'Then Job answered the LORD:  
2 I know that you can do all things,  
and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.  
3 Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?'  
Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand,  
Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.  
4 Hear, and I will speak;  
I will question you and you declare to me'  
5 I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear,  
but now my eye sees you;  
6 therefore I despise myself,  
and repent in dust and ashes."

A Cry of Anguish - psalm 22.1-21

Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One is here;  
Come bow before him now with reverence and fear;  
In him no sin is found - we stand on holy ground.  
Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy one is here.

Welcome and introduction

Psalm 22: let us say alternate verses together, following after I read the first verse.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?  
Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night and find no rest.

Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted and you delivered them.

To you they cried, and were saved; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

But I am a worm, and not human; scorned by others, and despised by the people.

All who see me mock at me; they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;

'Commit your cause to the Lord; let him deliver - let him rescue the one in whom he delights!'

Yet it was you who took me from the womb; you kept me safe on my mother's breast. on you I was cast from my birth, and since my mother bore me you have been my God.

Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no-one to help.

Many bulls encircle me, strong bulls of Bashan surround me;

They open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and roaring lion.

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast;

My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death.

For dogs are all around me; a company of evildoers encircles me. My hands and feet have shriveled,

I can count my bones. They stare and gloat over me;

They divide my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots. But you, O Lord, do not be far away! O my help, come quickly to my aid!

Deliver my soul from the sword, my life from the power of the dog!

Save me from the mouth of the lion!

Time for thoughts on the Psalm and Reflection.

Prayers

Music,

Silence before Compline

## 2. Joyce, John: Suffering and Pastoral Care (Tape Notes)

### **Suffering and Pastoral Care** **Father John Joyce**

There is a great deal of suffering in God's creation; and as soon as I make that statement we go into the whole question of why there is suffering in God's creation. A good starting point is Genesis 3. The story of Adam and Eve is a wonderful, allegorical, explanation of how things came to be imperfect in this world which God created. We can describe this as *Original Sin* or, more accurately, the fact that God gives us free will and therefore allows us to mess up God's creation. God says to us: "here you are; here is a world in which you are created in the image and likeness (Genesis 1.26) of God who is love." And yet, we make our choices in a way that allows in suffering; and suffering is in the world because that is what we have chosen, how we have made the world. Much of the world's suffering can be attributed to the callousness and wickedness of humankind.

But, of course, there is also the suffering of natural disaster, the human condition, things that we can't control; things that we don't understand; and that's part of the suffering we have to live with. All that suffering is as the result of how and where the earth is, together with the suffering that results from our failure to do what we can and should do.

We must be very careful not to see suffering as cause and effect; it's not God's punishment (though there is still a way of Christian thinking that takes that path still - the bishop of Carlisle did blame the 2007 floods on British sinfulness!) It's important to think how we respond to suffering because we are bound in the course of life to be confronted by it. It is our Christian task to be there, to be alongside the sufferer; but, more than that, to show sympathy which literally means to suffer with whereas empathy has a sense of identifying with. Another important word is compassion, again the ability to suffer with, but there's something about the word that is much stronger than sympathy - and I'm not sure why words develop that way but they do - compassion has the sense of doing something to mitigate by actually being constructive.

The danger is to say: "What or who can we blame?" (I think of BGR Bloomer Solicitors who advertise relentlessly on Classic FM encouraging people to sue on a no-win-no-fee basis). Why didn't somebody do something earlier; why didn't someone tell me to stop doing that? There's the danger of being liable.

In considering our approach to suffering, particularly when we are confronted with the needs of others, we need to go back to Jesus on Love and John 13 on the New Commandment: "As I have loved you, so you should love one another". And he does this after he has put on a towel and washed their feet, the Rabbi washing the feet of his followers. On another occasion Jesus is told that his mother and family were outside, he asked: "What has that got to do with me?" His family were the people he related to.

Then in Matthew 5-7, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus describes the way we should behave to each other and central to this is the importance of forgiveness, of sorting things out, of preventing rancour from building up; don't come to church if you're not speaking to your sister or brother. Sorting things out in love is far more important than being in church on Sunday.

Then there's the woman taken in adultery (John 8) where Jesus doesn't say "It's all right." He says: "Sort yourself out; go away and sin no more". How does Jesus deal with Zacchaeus? (Luke 19.1-10) Well, Jesus brings him down from the tree and says he's going to eat at his house; and Zacchaeus is so overwhelmed by this that he promises to put right all his extortions. So when we are thinking about relationships, Jesus says we must go and do what we have to do.

Of course, in pastoral care terms we can't go that far; we can't tell people that they must go and do what they have to do; but we have to be aware that a great deal of unhappiness is caused in people who can't face up to what they have done or failed to do or who can't face the callousness of others; so situations just get worse.

It's also important to help people to understand what they can change and what they can't change so that they can fix what can be fixed and make contributions to helping other people.

The most important thing is to help people to remind themselves of how Jesus approached not only the suffering of other people but, in the last resort, his own suffering.



## **4.7 Resources**

1. Carey, Kevin: Aspects of Love (Section 4.4)

### **Section 4.4 Aspects of Love**

**Kevin Carey**

**Version 1.0 – 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2009**

Because of the way that our culture has developed, love is largely understood as a matter of doing things: making sacrifices, giving presents or writing poetry. How much we love is judged by how much we do. The danger of this kind of love is that it can easily turn into a form of self expression on the one hand or of bargaining on the other: "I love you" can often come to mean "You need to know how much" or "You need to know the way in which I love you"; and it can also come to mean: "I love you more than you love me" or "I have been showing you all this love and nothing is coming back".

Of course, once we start loving to get something back we have ceased loving at all; love is for its own sake. We do not love our children, for example, so that they will love us in return but so that, in turn, they will love their children.

But there is another kind of love, and that is the love of making space for the beloved; and this is largely the kind of love that will be demanded of us as we provide pastoral care. Being our brother's keeper might simply mean being our brother's listening ear or shoulder to cry on. It might also mean hearing what we don't want to hear and biting our tongue. Love may occasionally mean giving difficult advice but more often it will mean refraining from giving advice and leaving people free to find their own solution, perhaps with a little gentle questioning and the odd nudge.

When we have an urge to give advice we must be careful that it does not arise from our own experience. Another way of thinking about love is exercising our imagination to put ourselves into the position of the other. In a very real sense, love is about otherness as well as being about accord.

## 5.7 Resources

### 1 Death and Bereavement (Finden)

#### Death and Bereavement

##### Introduction:

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and I am the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." (John 11:25-26)

##### The Christian Funeral

As well as time to remember and give thanks (to God) for someone who has died, the Christian funeral includes:

- affirmation of the Christian view of death (opening sentences)
- use of Scripture to affirm
  - (a) that God is with us
  - (b) the Christian belief that death is not the end -that all who put their faith in Christ can have the assurance of eternal life
- prayers
  - (a) giving thanks to God for the person who has died
  - (b) for those who mourn
  - (c) for all present ("Give us the wisdom to use well the time that is left to us on earth...")
  - (d) the Lord's prayer
  - (e) Prayer of Entrusting (Commendation)
  - (f) Committal

What emotions do we associate with the bereavement journey?

Things that can help someone bereaved:

Things that don't help:

#### CASE STUDIES

##### Amilee

Amilee died when she was five.

Since the day she was born, Amilee had been the centre of her mother's life. Amilee had complex medical needs, including epilepsy, developmental delay and visual impairment but to her family Amilee was a fighter, with real character who was loved completely. Amilee had just started at 'big school' which was such a milestone in her

life that everyone in the extended family had really celebrated. One morning Amilee's Mum went to her bedroom to discover that she had died in the night. After a six week delay due to coroner's investigations and procedures, Amilee was buried. It was a humanist funeral. Amilee had not been Baptised.

Greg:

Greg died in a tragic car accident at the age of 38. He was married with three children; 2 daughters (aged 6 and 8) and a son aged 12. Greg was very much a family man, hard working and committed. He loved his job working for a bank locally. His wife is obviously devastated and is struggling with 'keeping it together' for the children. Greg's service was in church, followed by a cremation.

Betty:

Betty, aged 84, died in hospital six weeks after being admitted. She had been living at home with her husband, but caught a bad chest infection when the weather turned very cold and in the end died of pneumonia. Fred, her husband, is now alone at home, finding it hard to cope. Betty used to do most of the household chores. Fred's family who had been staying with him over the funeral period have now returned home and are only able to visit every 3 or 4 weeks at the weekend. Betty's funeral was at the Crematorium.

Some emotions that may be experienced as part of the grief journey:

- fear
- anger
- restlessness and anxiety
- personality changes
- loneliness
- depression
- guilt
- irrational feelings
- hallucinations/voices

The grief process (bearing in mind the complexity of an individual person's grief, there are four main stages of the grief journey:

- numbness
- yearning
- depression
- resolution

Things that help:

- sensitive visiting

- allowing someone to talk out their grief
- acknowledging that it is a long journey
- allowing tears, fears and anger
- recognition of anniversaries
- offers of trips out (where appropriate)
- written communications
- being happy to rehear the story

Things that don't help:

- Insensitive comments/use of Scripture
- long talkative visits
- not recognizing someone's need for company and space
- making someone's personal grief feel part of an impersonal grief process

### **Why Secular people still want Christian funerals**

Alan Billings analyses the strange survival of religious rites  
Article from the Church Times 29 July 2005

APART FROM the horseracing tipster on the BBC's Today programme, no one has a worse record for predictions than the sociologist of religion. The classical sociologists expected organised religion to wither on the vine. Religion might be the heart of a heartless world and the opiate of the people, but, once the people were liberated and prosperous, there would be no need for supernatural consolations.

As societies modernised, and human life was organised in an increasingly rational manner, superstition (for which read religion) would disappear. In global terms, none predicted the Pentecostal and charismatic surge within Christianity. None foresaw the Islamic revival. All would find the contemporary religious culture of the United States inexplicable.

The sociology of religion in this country is likely to be an even more unreliable guide, since it is incorrigibly Europe-centered, and, as a result, still largely in the grip of those earlier theories of secularisation. This seems to make it incurious about significant pieces of evidence that fly in the face of secular assumptions.

For example, if we are so secular, why does the religious funeral persist? Not just most, but the overwhelming majority, of funerals are religious. This seems to me an important question, and one that clergy need to think hard about as well, if we are to continue to offer effective ministry to the bereaved.

FOR THE PAST two years, I have been thinking around this question. As I have visited people in my Kendal parish to arrange the funeral of loved ones, I have tried to tease out what it is that they think a religious funeral offers, as opposed to a secular one.

Of course, it is open for someone to say that when someone dies there is little choice. It is the vicar or nobody. Everything happens so swiftly, and you are emotionally so fragile, that there simply isn't time to look around for a secular alternative.

There is some truth in this, though not much. It is true that people would have to be very quick off the mark in Kendal to avoid a religious funeral, since there are such good working relationships between funeral directors and clergy that clergy can be visiting the bereaved within hours of a death being notified. These days, though, almost everyone lives into advanced old age; we have many years in which to think about our obsequies, and to make our wishes known.

Also, in our consumerist society, I am sure that if the demand for secular funerals were there, a national alternative to the religious funeral would by now have emerged. So why does the religious funeral persist?

There is space to suggest two reasons. This is how I make sense of what people say — though interpretation is not always easy.

THE FIRST reason has to do with the contrast between a religious and a secular funeral. This became clear to me earlier this year when I was asked to officiate at the funeral of someone I had known for 30 years. I was surprised to be asked, because the friend was an atheist, and his partner wanted a secular funeral. Not without difficulty, though out of friendship, I agreed.

For a Christian priest, however, this was like trying to save someone from drowning with your arms and legs tied together. Much of what I would want to say, I could not say. Much of what I would want to do — such as pray and commend my friend to God — I had to refrain from doing.

The occasion consisted of favourite pieces of music and short eulogies by friends, all with an amusing story or two. (And it was all done well.) It was a “celebration” of a life. And that, of course, gives the clue. The secular funeral can look only in one direction — backwards, to a life now lived.

It is literally hopeless, for hope is about the future, and the one thing the non-believer knows is that there is no future beyond physical death; for without God there could be no future beyond physical death. Many people may not be convinced believers, but they want to keep the door of hope at least ajar. The secular funeral slams it shut.

This leads into a second reason why the religious funeral persists. The secular funeral essentially makes a utilitarian evaluation of the life lived, based on the contribution the deceased has made — as partner, parent, friend, citizen. This works for many funerals, but by no means all. Some of these are obvious: I think immediately of the funerals of a suicide; a severely mentally handicapped baby; a young man who destroyed his life and that of others in a drink-induced car crash; a young woman who gave her short life to drugs.

With other funerals, we pick our way with care: there may not be a whole skeleton in the cupboard, but we are made aware of a few bones. It then becomes hard or forced to find convincing reasons to be wholly celebratory.

But, in the church funeral, the evaluation of a life is religious, not utilitarian: whatever we have done in and with our lives, Christ died for us. This allows us to express a range of emotions: sorrow and sadness, guilt and regret, despair and anger, as well as thankfulness and pride. All can be accommodated. We don't even have to labour any point, since the liturgy takes care of it. And, at the key moment, the rite is unambiguous: we commend the dead to God.

We do live in a time of no religion — a time when many people do not want regular contact with organised religion. This makes those moments when they do of considerable significance. We need to keep puzzling out why that is, so that we can minister more effectively. Why do people ask for a religious funeral? Because it allows us to say our farewells with integrity, and does not close the door on hope. Canon Dr Alan Billings is the Vicar of St George's, Kendal, and St John's, Grayrigg, and the author of *Secular Lives, Sacred Hearts: The role of the Church in a time of no religion* (SPCK, 2004).

*Extract from Fear No Evil: A Personal Struggle with Cancer, David Watson, (Hodder & Stoughton 1984), p. 168.*

Death for the Christian, it is sometimes said, is like the old family servant who opens the door to welcome the children home. Although it would be a mistake to base our beliefs on the experience of those who have clinically died but later have been restored to life, it is worth noting that of those who were Christians nearly all speak of walking peacefully into a garden full of staggeringly beautiful colours and exquisite music (or some similar description), so that it is with great reluctance that they came back to earth again.

It never worries me that we are not able to grasp more clearly the true nature of heaven. We can understand something of which we have no first-hand experience only by describing something with which we are familiar. We are limited by language. But for those who know God and who are trusting in Christ as their Saviour and Lord, there is nothing to fear, and it is sufficient to know that we shall be like him and perfectly with him. Nothing could be more wonderful than that. Never fear the worst. The best is yet to be.

When I die, it is my firm conviction that I shall be more alive than ever, experiencing the full reality of all that God has prepared for us in Christ. Sometimes I have foretastes of that reality when the sense of God's presence is especially vivid. Although such moments are comparatively rare they whet my appetite for much more. The actual moment of dying is still shrouded in mystery but as I keep my eyes on Jesus am not afraid. Jesus has already been through death for us, and will be with us when we walk through it ourselves.

*Extract from John A T Robinson, from the sermon, 'Learning from Cancer' in Eric James, The Life of Bishop John A T Robinson (Collins 1987) pp 304, 307 - 308*

Two years ago I found myself having to speak at the funeral of a sixteen-year old girl who died in our Yorkshire dale. I said stumbly that God was to be found in the cancer as much as in the sunset. That I firmly believed, but it was an intellectual statement. Now I have had to ask if I can say it of myself which is a much greater test. How does one prepare for death, whether of other people or of oneself? It is something we seldom talk about these days. Obviously there is the elementary duty (urged in the Prayer Book) of making one's will and other dispositions, which is no more of a morbid occupation than taking out life insurance. And there is the deeper level of seeking to round off one's account, of ordering one's priorities and what one wants to do in the time available. And notice such as this concentrates the mind wonderfully and makes one realize how much of one's time one wastes or kills. When I was told that I had six months, or perhaps nine, to live, the first reaction was naturally of shock though I also felt liberated, because, as in limited-over cricket, at least one knew the target one had to beat. My second reaction was 'Gosh, six months is a long time. One can do a lot in that. How am I going to use it?'

.... In fact 'preparing for death' is not the other-worldly, pious exercise stamped upon our minds by Victorian sentimentality, turning away from the things of earth for the things of 'heaven'. Rather, for the Christian it is preparing for 'eternal life', which means real living, more abundant life, which is begun, continued, though not ended, now. And this means it is about quality of life not quantity. How long it goes on here is purely secondary. So preparing for eternity means learning to really live, not just concentrating on keeping alive. It means living it up, becoming more concerned with contributing to and enjoying what matters most – giving the most of life and getting the most from it, while it is on offer.

## 6.7 Resources:

1. Moulds, Tim: Love One Another V1.0 9.2.09

### **Moulds, Tim: Love One Another Version 1.0, 9 February 2009**

We will cover some key concepts in this short talk: love, trust, family love, love in marriage, friendship. We all have our own experience, our own wisdom, to bring to these subjects. So the talk is a reminder, perhaps an ordering, of things that we know. I hope it will be a useful start to our discussion.

First of all, three points about love and relationships that we need to remember in our pastoral care work:

You may know the work of the psychologist Abraham Maslow. He said that all healthy people have a hierarchy of needs. He presented it as a pyramid. At the first level, people are driven by the need to stay alive – to find food and water. Then they strive for safety, they want to be sure that their supplies of food and water are secure for the future, and that they are safe from harm. Once they have their food and their safety, people then have a driving need for loving relationships.

Maslow reminds us that loving relationships are a basic human need. People strive for them in the same way that hungry people strive for food.

So the first point to make about loving relationships is that they are desperately important.

The next point: relationships are about emotions. No surprises yet! But there are implications. When we listen to someone, telling us about something that is desperately important to them, and that is emotional, we know that will not get an objective, unbiased picture.

And so to a third point about relationships: they involve other people. (Still no surprises!)

When we hear someone speak about a relationship, we listen with respect, with empathy, but also with sensible caution. We are listening to someone speak about an issue that is important, emotional, and one sided.

Intellectually, we know this. 'We only get one side of the story' we say. But it is often shocking when we do hear the other side, and realise how different the truth can be for two different people.

So, those are the basics: we need loving relationships; relationships are emotional; we will only get one side of the story.



## Now, some thoughts about good relationships

Most of us have personal experience of a loving relationship that is working, or has worked well. It may have been with a spouse, a sister or brother, a close friend, or a child. We can think about those relationships and we can complete the sentence: "Love is ..."

Just to take a few of those "Love is" quotations from 1 Corinthians 13, which we heard two weeks ago.

Love is patient. Love is kind. Love is not envious. Love does not insist on its own way. Love is not irritable. Love rejoices in truth. Love bears all things. Love hopes all things.

Here are some sayings that I think we would add, about love at its best:

Love is unconditional

Love is vulnerable

Love is generous; it delights in giving and doesn't even consider the cost

Love inspires the beloved, to grow, to take risks, to do more

One way to make all these "Love is..." sayings, more personal, and more challenging, is to think of ourselves and our part in a loving relationship. Would the other person say about us, not "Love is ...", but "You are ..."

You are patient. You are kind. You are not envious. You do not insist on your own way. You are not irritable.

You inspire me to grow, to take risks, to do more.

It's an exercise that helps us, and challenges us, to empathise with the other person in the relationship - to see ourselves as the other person sees us.

It also reminds us that empathy is one of the main ingredients of a good relationship. Love inspires empathy. And it works the other way too. Empathy helps to build, or to mend, loving relationships. If we can encourage someone to see themselves as the other person sees them, that will be helpful.

So. Empathy helps.

And Trust helps too. Trust means, of course, more than believing what the other person says. Perhaps Faith is a better word. In a loving relationship, we have faith in the person we love, faith in their integrity, in their abilities, in their spirit, in their capacity to grow. Faith means we don't own them, or limit them. No, we have faith in them, we love them.

We have had three reminders about Loving Relationships:

For every "Love is ..." saying, try it with "I am ...". Love is not irritable: I am not irritable. Empathy helps: it grows from love, and it builds and rebuilds love.

Love means having faith in the other person.

Using those general guidelines, we can think about what matters most in different relationships.

In family relationships, in the love that a parent has for the child, all these general points are true. Some of them seem especially relevant:

Love is generous, Love delights in giving. We love, not because we are going to be loved back in equal measure by the child. We want the child to grow with the capacity for loving and being loved by others.

Love means having faith in the child.

Love inspires the child to grow, to take risks, to do more.

I think that most of us don't try very hard to empathise with our children when they are young.

In marriage and partnership, the general points work too. Empathy is often a missing ingredient in relationships that are strained.

In a loving marriage, both partners are vulnerable to the other. It is a measure of their faith that they do not worry about that vulnerability.

If one partner uses the vulnerability of the other, the relationship changes, and can become destructive.

Friendship is usually a more fluid relationship than family love or marriage.

But for some people, that basic human need for loving relationships is met through their friendships.

And finally, some thoughts about loving relationships and Pastoral Care:

Relationships are diverse. We should expect stories of relationships to surprise us. When we hear the beginning of the story of a relationship, we should never think that we know what is coming next. We must go on listening, using all those careful, active listening skills.

We do so for two reasons. We cannot guess the story; it may well surprise us; and we need to hear it. And of course, it helps the other person to tell the story.

And that prompts the thought: it will only help them if they are telling the truth. I have listened to a man telling me about himself, and it was clear that he was making it up. He was saying what he wanted to be true, but it wasn't. As time went on, and over a number of meetings, he found that he could tell the truth.

I take different lessons from the experience. Careful, respectful listening, and time, will gradually help people to tell the truth and so to see the truth.

We may be tempted to challenge, to ask checking questions, to say or to imply "I don't believe you". My feeling is that we should not do that.

We may think that we cannot help someone, and that they cannot help themselves, until they see the truth and tell the truth. So it may be tempting to offer a deal, saying in effect "if you start telling the truth, I may be able to help you". Again, I think we should not do that.

We should listen, carefully and respectfully. We can hope that a person will start to tell the truth. And we can be patient.

As we said last week, Pastoral Care is Love. So the person we are with, learns that they can tell us about themselves honestly. Whatever they tell us, it will not diminish our care for them.

I will end with some poetic words from Nelson Mandela.

"We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?

Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God.

We are all meant to shine, as children do.

We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us.

It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone.

And as we let our own light shine, we give other people permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

**7.1 Harries, Richard: The Re-Enchantment of Morality, (SPCK, 2008) Chapter 7  
Money: ISBN 978 0 281 05947 8**

## 8.7 Resources:

1. Carey, Kevin: Unit Eight: Worry – Martha & Mary
2. Moulds, Tim: Unit Eight: Worry

### **Carey, Kevin: Unit Eight: Worry – Martha & Mary Version 3.1 19<sup>th</sup> February 2009**

Genesis 18.1-15; Luke 10.38.42.

We all know the story of Martha and Mary: Martha did the housework while Mary sat at the feet of Jesus. Somewhat jarringly, in a pragmatic culture like ours that is somewhat suspicious of religious 'dreamers', Jesus seems to side with Mary. It would serve him right if he got no dinner! The problem with this account is that it turns a voluntary choice into victimhood. There is no evidence that anybody forced Martha into her endless round of domestic chores and some evidence that this is the lifestyle she has chosen. Indeed, many of us would recognise such symptoms as:

- Obsessive tidiness;
- The inability to sit down;
- Impatience;
- The need to make others 'suffer' because we are suffering.

There are all kinds of bits and pieces of these ideas in Martha. It is a self imposed set of worries; nobody but Martha minds if dinner is not on the table at the stroke of seven; they are all enjoying a drink and a chat and don't mind half an hour either way; and nobody much minds if the points of the triangular napkins are all pointing the same way; and when they finally do get to eat, even though Martha cooked because that's what she really likes doing, no compliment will be handsome enough to satisfy her.

In other words, Martha's kind of worry is self imposed, it's manipulative and attention getting. It would be unfair to say that what she does is totally under her own control (there are factors of nature and nurture that partly make us what we are) but it would be equally unfair to say that she cannot control a great deal of her life; this might mean modifying her behaviour and this might involve some effort, even sacrifice; but there is no doubt that Martha is in control. The only doubt is how far she wants to control others and how far she simply wants their attention.

Sarai's situation, however, is altogether more acute. Her husband Abram keeps coming home with these big ideas about being the head of a powerful dynasty but they don't have a son; Abram has fathered some boys but not by Sarai. This is the kind of crisis made familiar to English people by Henry VIII. God tells Abram, in the hearing of Sarai, that everything will be all right; but she still worries; and then Isaac is born and things come right.

At the centre of these two pieces of scripture there lies the question about the nature of worry; what is it? As people who have offered ourselves to help those who worry to

overcome their worst fears, it is important for us to disentangle a number of factors which have come to be entangled, particularly in the minds of the worriers themselves.

- First, there is Martha's discontent with her lack of recognition but;
- Secondly, and more important, there is her obsession with detail which we might classify, on a spectrum, as a disorder or self indulgence;
- Thirdly, there is not much evidence of this in Martha but she might be jealous of Mary or, more likely, she might be making a comparison in which she comes off second best.

Sarai, on the other hand:

- Is severely socially and hierarchically disadvantaged;
- Even her status with her husband is in doubt;
- She is being insulted by Abram's concubines; and
- Altering her life style won't produce a baby.

Before going on it is important not to fall into the trap of ranking these two sets of dilemmas and thinking that Martha's condition is frivolous while Sarai's is serious; comparison is always dangerous when looking at worry.

What I want to go on to consider are the two concepts of empowerment and contentment as strategies for helping people who are worried.

The first thing to say is that even if Martha is somewhat obsessive, there are things she can do about it; she is a powerful and not a poor woman; and she can get extra hep or find time to sit at the feet of Jesus if she wants to; but she doesn't. Conversely, Sarai is helpless. So the first thing to think about is how much control people have over their lives. People who worry generally imply that they are helpless spectators but if we want to put this into perspective, let us think about people now and, say, only 100 years ago and the control we have over our lives because of:

- Higher living standards;
- Better health and longer lives;
- Reduced manual labour;
- Better nutrition;
- The mobility of private cars and cheap public transport;
- At least a partial understanding of the way in which our brains work;
- An understanding of sub conscious motivation and the use of irony and ambiguity in expression;
- Massive pattern recognition capacity through scholarship and computing to interpret the past and forecast the future.

So, with all that going for us, what are we worrying about compared, say, with 100 years ago? Here are some suggestions:

- A lack of an active and respected role in a well defined community;
- A breakdown of common beliefs and language in which to discuss problems;
- Inflated expectations;

- Too much choice;
- Difficulty with establishing simple, linear narratives;
- The breakdown of hierarchy.

If we want to help people to reduce their level of worry, we need to consider the following empowerment strategies:

- When issues are identified individually they are easier to handle. You know the feeling of waking up at 3 in the morning and everything comes crowding in; and instead of a few issues simply being items, the gravity of each is multiplied by the others;
- Concrete plans are better than theories of how a particular problem might be handled. We are all so bound up in the media that we tend to want to abstract; so that the thing that legitimises what we do is whether it is what most other people would do. In spite of our equal insistence that we are 'fundamentally different' so the solution cannot be standard, we are deeply suspicious of unique solutions which depart from what other people have told us; this is particularly true in medicine;
- There is a place for self help, collaboration and taking a problem off a worrier's hands. In the first instance, even a prisoner can choose in tiny ways; and it is always important to maintain and expand choice and autonomy because they are the basis of self esteem and without that collaboration is not possible. It may be, however, that the person you are listening to has a Sarai rather than a Martha kind of problem; and that is when it is the right time to consider handing over the worrier's problem to our team leader;
- Self help groups, particularly dealing with health conditions, can be very helpful but some of them can be rather scare-oriented, so encourage a worrier about health to work with the GP or Practice Nurse to sort out the best approach;
- Finally, worry is frequently exacerbated by loneliness; it can, in a serious sense, be manufactured to pass the time just as many of us watch horror movies to generate fear. The self help group might be one form of release but mixing with completely different kinds of people might help.

On the other side of the equation between reality and expectation, we need to explore the idea of contentment:

- Understanding the limits of human autonomy and collaboration to 'solve' a problem is a critical factor in mapping a way forward;
- There is a vital nexus between action and acceptance, as in the familiar aphorism "We have done all we can";
- Acceptance is easier if we have done all we reasonably can; people are frequently worn down by what they did not do or thought they did not do.

It is now time to return to the second part of our stories. Mary took a deliberate decision to sit at the feet of Jesus. Sarai didn't really have much choice as it was Abram who did all the talking with God.

The point about worry in the Christian context, even more so than in the secular context,

is that we are not alone. The good pastoral care worker will always want to use the strategies already outlined above to reduce worry; but the Christian will always want to say that God is with us, Jesus showed how he cares and the Holy Spirit is within us.

Mary gained the praise of Jesus and Sarai had her baby and for that reason I want to finish with just a single comment on prayer. We are all too apt to focus almost exclusively on intercessory prayer: God will only do what is right for us in the context of our lives of witness, which is far from the same thing as giving us what we want or what our friends sincerely want for us.

Prayer is about more than asking. We need to remember for what we should be thankful. That may not seem to be much comfort for the worrier but the last thing we will want to do as carers and listeners is to collaborate in heightening what already exists, real or imagined.



**Moulds, Tim: Unit Eight: Worry**  
**Version 2.0, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2009**

The bishop of Durham, Tom Wright, is a bible scholar and writer, as well as a bishop. In his book, "Following Jesus", he says this:

"Do you know what the most frequent command in the Bible turns out to be? What instruction, what order, is given, again and again, by God, by angels, by Jesus, by prophets and apostles? What do you think? Be good? Be Holy? Don't sin? Don't be immoral? No. The most frequent command in the Bible is: Don't be afraid. Don't worry. Fear Not. Don't be afraid."

But we know, very well, that it doesn't help to say "don't worry", "don't be afraid", to someone who is worried or afraid.

First of all, think about our own experience of hearing those words. Often they make things worse. When the government said 'don't worry' about eating beef, and we watched cows staggering across our TV screens, we thought that we should worry. And we were right. When our children say to us, "It'll be fine, don't worry", we know that they are either ill-prepared, or they are planning something reckless.

It is helpful too, to think about the times when we are tempted to say, "don't be afraid, don't worry". Usually we resist the temptation, and rightly so. It will be unhelpful, and sometimes it can be destructive. What we imply with those words is: "you may think you have worries, but actually, if you were more sensible or more competent, you would realise that your worries can be dismissed with a couple of words."

So there is a contradiction here. The Bible tells us, even Jesus tells us, again and again "Don't worry, don't be afraid". But our own experience tells us that those words, on their own, are unhelpful or worse.

There may be a way through this, in the story of the storm on the Sea of Galilee<sup>1</sup>. It's in three of the gospels. I am sure you remember it: a sudden storm sends waves towering over the boat, and even into the boat. Jesus continues to sleep. When the disciples wake him, he calms the storm. He asks the disciples "why are you afraid?"

We can hear the story in two ways. In the gospels, it is a sign that Jesus can call on the power of God, and God can calm the storm. The disciples were amazed. With hindsight, we know that Jesus is the Son of God, so it comes as no surprise that Jesus can call on God. We know that God made the universe, from the planets and stars, to the birds in the air. Calming a storm seems well within his powers.

So the story is less remarkable to us than to the disciples – easier for us to believe, even though we weren't there and they were.

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 8.23-27. Mark 4.35-41. Luke 8.26-39.

It would be even more of a miracle to us, if we heard the story in a different way. Jesus awakes. He leaves the storm and the wind and the waves untouched. With a word, he calms the disciples. Suddenly they understand: God is with them. Whatever happens, it will not be some ghastly accident; it will be what God wants. They look around. They have stowed the sails, they have tied down anything that could move. Like Jesus, they lie down and go to sleep while the storm rages on.

If that seems impossible, it is what we are called to do. To visit someone who is troubled. Because of our visits, they understand that they are not alone. They see that they have done what they can, or perhaps there is something that they can do. Their troubles, that looked overwhelming, now seem more manageable. And at night, they get a better sleep.

To be practical, we do need to think about how we achieve that transformation.

First of all, we listen. As we listen and as we show that we care, that in itself tells the other person “you are not alone in this”.

It may be that we will hear troubles spilling out, jumbled up and tangled together. As we listen, occasionally we ask questions, or we summarise, so that the other person knows they are being heard. The problems begin to separate. For some problems, something can be done. Often the speaker will suggest what it is. We can endorse that.

Sometimes we may need to help people to see the way ahead. It may be useful to ask: “Is there anyone who might help you with that?” or “Would it help to meet others who are in similar situations?”

As Kevin has said, when the issues are looked at one at a time, they seem less daunting. When they are separated, some problems require practical help; others can be addressed in ‘support groups’. We can help the person we are visiting to decide on ‘next steps’. Suddenly, one part of what seemed an intractable tangle, looks like a thread that has identifiable ends, and can be untangled. A useful test: can we answer the question: who is going to do what, and when?

There may also be issues that cannot be solved, but have to be endured. For the person we visit, speaking about those issues, being listened to with care and love, will be helpful. And the passage of time may be necessary too.

There may be times when all of this, careful listening, separating issues out, making practical plans where appropriate, doesn’t work or is not enough. You may hear about issues and problems that seem to you to carry with them the risk of harm, of continued or even increasing suffering. In that situation, we can listen, understand as best we can, and after the meeting, we can ask for help. We have each other to call upon, individually and collectively.

But there will be other issues that seem to be intractable, because (it seems to us) that the person who has the problem is not willing to do anything to address it. The problem is part of who they are, and is important to them. It is not our job to tell them that. Nor are we there to get them to give up their problem. It may be that careful and respectful listening will help. But you may also feel that your listening only encourages a circular restatement of the issue - that you are colluding with self indulgence. Should you go on visiting? It is a fair question, and again it is one we should seek help to answer.

There is one specific area of fear and worry that I think it helps to discuss here. In summary, it is possible to feel that the world is getting worse, that it is quite literally, going to hell.

Here is an illustration of the point. Could you guess please, what number of people were shot and killed in England & Wales last year? To make it manageable, could you guess the number of people that were shot and killed in an average week. You won't be tested on this. But do please bring a figure to mind.

The answer is one.

I guess that most of us had a higher figure in mind. The world seems more frightening than it is. It is true in almost all areas of what we might call 'public concern'.

There are different reasons.

Each murder is a desperate tragedy. People suffer and grieve. Their stories are harrowing and we remember them. We tend not to be told the numbers and if we are, we don't remember them.

We see the world as worse than it is because we understand and retain stories. We are less good at numbers. It's the way we are.

And of course, we can blame the media (with some justification). Often we get stories. Rarely do we get statistics or context.

Here's a statistical fact. With an average murder rate of one per week, it's very likely that in one week every year there will be five murders. That's normal. It's just the way that events clump into groups. You can imagine the media story: "Violent crime wave: five people shot last week". The other part of this same normal pattern is that in many weeks there will be no murders at all. We would not expect to see a headline: "No fatal shootings this week".

I am sure we should not take statistical lectures to our meetings. Nor should we carp about the media. But I think it helps if we recognise that we as individuals, all of us, can see the world as much worse than it is. We do so for reasons that do us credit. We are compassionate. We hear stories about suffering and we care about them and remember them. We are less good about dispassionate statistics that tell us the good news.

Perhaps it is more about faith than about statistics. We are called, as part of our Christian faith, to believe that God created the world, and that the world is good.

One last story.

In the nineteen sixties, we had two superpowers that were bitter enemies. They had weapons that could destroy the world and every living thing on it, several times over. We now know, that we avoided destruction by a narrow margin. At that time, Bruce Kent led the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. I remember him saying to a group of committed supporters, do what you can. But don't burn yourselves out. Leave something for God to do.

We believe in God; we believe in his love, his healing power, and in the goodness of his creation. All of that will convey itself to those we visit.

During the course we have all asked, in different ways: "What will I say, and what will I do?" We have learned some useful answers to those questions. But I think we have realised, as we have gone along, that what may be most important, is simply who we are. We go into meetings as ourselves, with our faith, with God's love in us, and with care and concern for the person we visit.

## 9.7 Resources

1. Carey, Kevin: The Role of Prayer in Pastoral Care
2. Carey, Kevin: Prayer Fragments

### **Carey, Kevin: The Role of Prayer in Pastoral Care Version 3.0, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

There is, perhaps, nothing more puzzling than prayer; it is supposed to be absolutely central to our Christian lives and yet, except in the case of public worship, most people find its reality elusive. It's also important to say that most people find prayer difficult and often believe that while they are facing problems most other people are not. If you are trying to establish a communications link between two different orders of creation - in this case the Creator and the creature - then it is bound to be difficult; so don't worry.

Let us start by reminding ourselves of some basic concepts:

1. The objective of prayer is to establish two-way communication with God
2. We usually divide our communication to God into: adoration, contrition, thanksgiving and supplication (acts).
3. There are, essentially, four styles of prayer:
  - Formal prayer - the kind of thing we experience in church;
  - Structured prayer - the kind that we find in prayer books;
  - Extempore prayer - the kind which we most often use when we are reacting to a situation or an occasion without a set text;
  - Silent prayer - this is the most difficult and apart from a few comments on the need to be careful in this area, it isn't part of this presentation.

What we are largely going to concentrate on here is structured prayer in a pastoral context but we need to think just a little about silent prayer. There isn't much point saying to people "Pray!" if we have no idea whether they 'know how' and if we have no idea in our own minds what it means. If we advise somebody to pray without taking a great deal of care, there is a danger that we will establish false hopes which are dashed when the person receiving our care is disappointed with the results. Nor is there much point in advising other people about the centrality of prayer if we don't pray ourselves. Sorting out our own prayer life is important for us as individuals but it is also important if we are to put ourselves into a position of responding to the need for care. This isn't some special obligation undertaken by "holy" people. We need to take care of it as a matter of urgency.

A key point about prayer which has already been mentioned but not underlined is that prayer is not simply an intercessory process whereby the supplicant asks for things from God; and, subsidiary to that but also important, supplicatory prayer is not transactional; there is no formula which establishes a link between how much we pray or how

intensely we pray and whether our prayers are 'answered'. There is no entitlement and no transaction; everything we have is a gift of God and if anything happens as a result of prayer it is not because we ask but because God wills it so. In a sense that it is really important to grasp, prayer is our process of self examination which facilitates our communication with God.

In the pastoral context, then, it is really important for us to bear in mind that there is more to prayer than asking and there is no transactional aspect to it; but those who need our care will not normally welcome a theology lecture on the proper purposes of prayer.

What we need to do is to build a structure around the person's need to be involved in supplicatory prayer. The reason we are present is because the person needs care and it is natural enough that most people will want to ask God to alleviate the situation which makes that need arise. There is nothing wrong with praying for ourselves - Jesus encourages us to do this - but there needs to be balance and perspective. In a very gentle way, therefore, we might try these four steps:

- First, we must remind ourselves of the nature of god, of gift and of love; of our obligations, in addition to supplication, of Adoration, Thanksgiving and Contrition (ACTS is a useful acronym) but we might want to go easy at this point on the contrition)
- Secondly, because we are social creatures, the content of our prayer life concerns much more than our personal existence and how we relate to God; in a really important sense we don't have a personal existence; we might be able to imagine a hermit who only uses what he grows or forages, but he's a pretty rare phenomenon, so prayer should always have an element of the community, the social, the corporate in it. If we must pray for ourselves because we are ill, we might just want to remember other sick people and those who care for them and us
- Thirdly, having given prayer a proper balance and a social context, we need to recognise that any supplication is subject to "God's will for us". Recalling the prayer of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, our prayer should always be subject to the will of God; this is not rhetorical, it is the truth about what we are doing; to think otherwise is misleading and might cause damage by raising expectations. We might occasionally be somewhat flippant and say that we could not find a parking space, we said a quick prayer and suddenly one appeared before us; but in the context of people in need of care it is all too easy to fall into this kind of thinking.
- Finally - and this really is the most difficult aspect of what we are trying to do - the prayer ultimately has to focus on the love of God not the needs of the supplicant. Whereas we may have a very narrow view of our needs, our real comfort is not in having these met but in the knowledge that we live in the embrace of God's

unfailing love.

Having looked at the content of prayer, let us now look at how we pray, the method of prayer:

- First, prayer in a pastoral context is a shared experience; as carers we must not 'pray at' those we care for and although we may pray for them in our own prayers our objective is to pray with them in shared prayer
- Secondly, we should never impose anything except the most essential prayer which establishes our 'theme tune'; if we arrive at a house as a Christian pastoral care provider very few people will be either surprised or upset if we suggest saying the *Our Father* but we must be careful to remember that our main purpose is to be alongside people, not leading them on, pushing them from behind or talking down at them. Although we might think that it is important to pray, we must be careful to go with the grain of the situation; again, as we are offering care, we must be careful not to insist on something, particularly if, when we examine our conscience, it meets our need rather than that of the person for whom we are caring; we might demand prayer to satisfy our moral rectitude or because we have been taught that that is what we should do.
- Thirdly, unless we have long experience, we should not try to pray in an extempore fashion; in any case, the term is misleading because all good extempore prayer is highly structured; the person skilled in this area will have a set of very useful mental templates into which to drop prayer elements; and this leads to the fourth point:
- Finally, prepare for prayer. If we and the person to whom we are responding both agree that praying would be helpful, think about what we might pray and why. We should have a good grasp of our own prayer books and when we have asked our companion what she might like to pray - she will usually refer to something in a prayer book - we can agree or compromise.

Now what is the point of all this? I started out by talking about the communication between the person and God. In this context, we should not expect too much; prayer is like going to the gym, the more we practice, the better we are (although athletes do break down or lose enthusiasm) and most people, sadly, only turn to prayer when times are hard and then only to intercessory prayer. But the key here is that at times of human weakness, when our transmission powers are poor, what we need most of all is to leave ourselves open for communication coming the other way, from God. In our pastoral situation the most important thing we can do with respect to prayer is to call down the love of God in the power of the Holy Spirit and in union with Jesus, to see that the reception channels are nicely open; and then wait, not for a cure or correction of a current problem but for the power of God to be felt around us and within us. It is always there, latent, but what we need to do is to tune in.

None of these considerations should lead us to the mistaken conclusion that a person's concern is not all that serious because we can always think of somebody worse off than ourselves; to put a concern into a prayerful context is not to deny it or to downgrade it. The key is not to downgrade the concern but to see it in the context of God's unfailing love.

Finally, remember that all prayer is profoundly internal; even when it is public it only works because of how we approach our objective of communicating with and receiving god's self communication. The choreography of things "coming down" is not very helpful. As we share prayer with those who need our care, we must focus on our inner selves because that is where we will find God and the peace which that brings or rather, the peace which God is.



## Carey, Kevin: Prayer Fragments

### Version 1.0 – 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2009

#### 1. Introduction

Constructing prayers is not as daunting as it seems once we think about the different elements that we want to assemble.

In a pastoral situation we are usually wanting to ask Our Lord for help in some way; but we need to remember God's goodness, the example of Jesus, the comfort of the Holy Spirit and those things for which we should be thankful.

#### 2. Supplication Fragments

2.1 First, we introduce the person whom we will call Joe:

- *Lord, we place into your hands the care of your servant, Joe*

Of course we're doing nothing of the sort; Joe is in God's hands anyway; but this is just a way of showing our concern and how we want to connect Joe to God

2.2 Secondly, we could beat about the bush, reminding God of his goodness etc, but it's best to get straight to the point:

- *Give him the strength to bear his suffering and, if it is your will for him, restore him to wholeness of mind and body*

It's important that we remember that everything is subject to God's will. It does not sound intuitively right at first, but it isn't necessarily God's will that we all recover from illness.

2.3 Then we put Joe into context as we are all social beings:

- *We pray for all of Joe's fellow sufferers and we thank you for all those who care for those who suffer or who are in distress*

2.4 Having got the main points off our chest, we need to remind ourselves about the role of God in our lives:

- *In bringing before you your servant Joe, we call to mind your goodness, the compassion of your Son and the comfort of the Holy Spirit*

Remember, we're always praying to God the Father.

2.5 Rounding off:

- *We humbly make this prayer to you, through your Son and in the power of the*

*Holy Spirit*

3. Thanksgiving

3.1 It is vital in a pastoral setting that we don't simply confine all our prayer to supplication. It is quite proper to ask for things; but we also need to praise God and to thank God.

## 10.7 Resources

1. Parish of Findon, Clapham and Patching: Commissioning of Lay Visiting Team – Sunday 3 20 October 2005
2. Carey, Kevin: Notes on Journeys

### **Parish of Findon, Clapham and Patching Commissioning of Lay Visiting Team – Sunday 3 20 October 2005**

Walking together in the Way of Christ and sharing His love with others.

Refrain: The Lord is close to the brokenhearted;  
Blessed be the Lord!

I will bless the Lord at all times,  
God's praise always on my lips;  
Glorify the Lord with me,  
Together let us praise God's name. Refrain

I sought the Lord and was heard;  
from all my terrors set free.  
When the poor cry out the Lord hears them  
and rescues them from all their distress. Refrain

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted;  
Those whose spirit is crushed God will save.  
Many are the trials of the upright  
but the Lord will come to rescue them. Refrain  
(from Psalm 34)

Bishop: It is our great joy to commission this team of Lay visitors and to ask the Lord's blessing upon them. We give thanks to God that each one has responded to His call to serve Him among the people of this parish. In this service, as members of this parish, you are committing yourselves to this team and to supporting them in their ministries among you.

The Bishop addresses the team

Bishop: The Lord has been calling you to a pastoral ministry within the life of this parish, working with your Rector. You are called to share in the joys and sorrows of those you visit and to bring the love of the Lord Jesus in to the lives of those you meet.  
Will you care for those entrusted to you with diligence and faith and will you serve the people of this place with the love, humility and passion of Jesus Christ, your Lord?

Team: With the Lord's help, we will.

Bishop Will you minister As part of Christ's body, in the power of the Spirit and to the glory of God the Father?

Team: With the Lord's help, we will.

Bishop: Will you sustain this ministry with personal and corporate prayer and study of God's Word?

Team: With the Lord's help, we will.

The Bishop addresses the congregation

Bishop: Will you, by your prayers, your words and in practical ways support the members of this team in their ministry among you?

Congregation: With the Lord's help, we will.

The Bishop lays his hands on each member of the team, and prays for them.

The Bishop then prays for the team as a whole:

Heavenly Father,

We praise you for providing workers as gifts to your Church, to build up your people in faith and love.

We thank you today for the members of this team as they begin their new ministry.

We pray that you will equip them with every spiritual gift they will need and that they may serve you with humility and joy. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen

The team pray together:

Lord Jesus, I give you my hands to do your work.

I give you my feet to go your way.

I give you my eyes to see as you do.

I give you my tongue to speak your words.

I give you my mind that you may think in me.

I give you my spirit that you may pray in me.

Above all, I give you my heart.

I give you my whole self that you may grow in me,

so that it is you, Lord Jesus,  
who live and work and pray in me.

Amen.

Responses:

Stephen: Lord Jesus Christ, you emptied yourself, taking the form of a servant.

All: Through your love, make us servants of one another.

Stephen: Lord Jesus Christ, for our sake you became poor.

All: May our lives and gifts enrich the life of your world.

Stephen: Though many, we form one body in Christ.

All: We belong to one another.

Stephen: By God's grace we have different gifts.

All: We will use them in faith.

Stephen: Rejoice in hope, stand firm in trouble, be constant in prayer.  
Filled with His Spirit we will serve the Lord.

All: We will share His love with everyone.

The Bishop introduces the peace

**Carey, Kevin: Notes on Journeys**  
**Version 1.0 – 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2009**

Although we sometimes complain about public transport and the traffic jams we encounter in our private cars, we have almost completely lost the sense of the drama of a journey. Some of us know Southern France better than our neighbouring county; many of us have been to the other side of the world and commented that the plane was half an hour late.

This luxurious state of affairs might lead us to misunderstand the idea of journeying with people who need companionship. The image of the journey we wish to conjure up here is the ancient journey when there were few roads, considerable uncertainty, a degree of hardship and, therefore, a real sense of departure and arrival.

A word, too, about maps. In the kind of journey we are embarking upon a map is a useful tool but the kind of map we have in the course that we are completing only shows the big roads and the main features; what we are called upon to do is to use our skill with individual people to work out a path for each individual journey. There are some useful guidelines and concepts but there will frequently be points where we have to make detours and maybe, even, take a bit of a risk.

In the olden days of hazardous journeying, like those recalled in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, people travelled together for mutual comfort and protection; and there will be times when we will need to travel together; there will be some things which we will not be able to do alone.

There is another aspect of traditional journeys which we need to take into account; they often involved long periods of tedium: waiting for the wind to change, trudging across difficult terrain, held up by an injury to a horse. Although a lot of what we have talked about during our course has quite properly been how we deal with difficult cases, most of what we are likely to encounter will require patience above all else; and it is important in that context for us to keep things in proportion, neither dramatising what is low key nor being overcome by monotony and failing to notice a key sign. Most often people change slowly rather than suddenly; and if we are not vigilant, we may miss a significant trend.