

Monday 2 May 2022

Dear Friends

Our prayers for the oppressed people of Ukraine continue throughout these days. We pray for all those supporting them; for all who live in fear of their lives; for all who seek shelter; for all who are supporting them in so many and various ways; and for all leaders across the globe who search for peace. We pray for all who have died, those who are bereaved, those who are injured, and those who care for them.



Philip and James: apostles

During this week we celebrate the feast of Philip and James, apostles. Both had followed Jesus for a long time before they realised just who he was.

Like Philip and James we all need to realise that we are often totally helpless apart from God. Many of us feel helpless about Ukraine at this time.

Philip and James each needed to realise that humanity has an ability to be a bearer of divine power as a result of God's gift.

What is more, it is only through God's gift that seemingly impossible actions might be realised, such as feeding thousands of people with hardly any loaves and fish.

We look forward to celebrating Pentecost: the coming of the Holy Spirit to the disciples gathered in Jerusalem. For it is through the Holy Spirit that we are able to receive God's gifts of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.

Oh how we pray that those engaged in war might open themselves to the Holy Spirit and see the world in a new light!

This period is very special, coming between Easter Day when Jesus rose to new life, and Ascension Day when Jesus ascended to heaven. For it is during this time that we see Jesus in a new form: able to appear from nowhere; able to pass through walls; having abilities way beyond our comprehension. Yet he opts to support rather than to command: to encourage a person rather than to diminish. His whole relationship with people is one of love and engagement whilst challenging them to reorientate their thinking and actions.

Let us pray to our Father in heaven that we may open ourselves to be challenged in the same way, to receive courage to be more loving in our daily lives.

Amen

Richard Hinder

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