

## ETERNITY

*May the Lord bless us and lead us to eternal life.*

In my early years at primary school, Sr. Marie de Lourdes told my parents that I was “slow but sure”. I’m not quite sure what she meant by that but a few years later I was not too slow to gain a scholarship to the grammar school. However, I have already mentioned in a previous reflection how my Physics teacher thought me a complete write off, “freewheeling down the hill to failure and sipping sorrow from the spoon of grief”. Years later, when I was working and building a home for my family, my lifelong friend often quoted one of his favourite maxims “Work expands to the time allotted”. I thought he was just gently advising me to get a move on. Many, many years later, now I’m retired, I’m beginning to appreciate the wisdom of that saying.

When we first retire, we begin to wonder how we ever found the time to go to work. We throw ourselves enthusiastically into filling our new found freedom doing things we haven’t done before such as travelling across the country to visit grandchildren who are now at university; travelling abroad; finding new places to eat out; gardening and decorating. We begin to explore new interests, new skills. I purchased a laptop and learned how to use it and although I am still nowhere near computer literate, it led me to discover a talent I was not previously aware of. I started writing. As we advance in years, our minds tell us we are still young but our bodies tell us a different story’. Time seems to stretch while we slow down and have difficulty finding things, we are able to do to fill it.

Time is an enigma. I look back over the years and ask myself “How did I get to this age? Where did all those years go?” When I was a child, I didn’t think about time other than how birthdays and Christmas were a long time coming. My time was spent in the *now*; in my imagination; playing or reading; listening to stories being read or creating my own fantasy world. When I reached adulthood, I put all my efforts into furthering my career and building a home for my family. I spent a lot of time living in the future, making plans, setting targets. In old age, a lot of time is spent in the past, looking back, reminiscing on the way we were and being proud of what we have achieved, a long and happy marriage and a wonderful family and perhaps a little rueful about what we didn’t do. As I grow older, I have become more aware of my mortality. I try to contemplate eternity, an existence where time no longer exists but I am unable to comprehend it. I hope and pray that it will be in God’s eternal kingdom, a never-ending spiritual ecstasy of love in the presence of God.

Last week we meditated on Jesus’ passion, his suffering and death and I thought how much Jesus has done for me and how little I have done for him. I think that I will be judged not so much on what I have done, rather on the things I have failed to do. The chances I’ve had to help others and not even realised they were in need; The opportunities to step out of my comfort zone to do something for Jesus and failed to take advantage of them.

Now it is Easter, Christ has risen! We are saved, salvation is possible. We only have to recognise and admit our failures and with a firm purpose of amendment look forward to the years ahead and accept whatever God puts before us.

*The love that asks not anything,  
Love like thy own free,  
Jesu, I give, who art my King,  
Who art my God, to thee.*