**What Are We Called To Be?**

**Reflection**

Some people are skilled at recognising the calls and songs of birds. They know how to distinguish between warning calls, friendly chatter and mating rituals. This gift is honed by listening carefully and by regular practice. It begins with noticing that more is going on in the world than the idle chatter that clogs up our head even when out walking among the wonders of nature. If we are not attentive to the sounds around us in the natural world then we may miss out on the many ways that God is trying to speak to us, offering us protection, conversation or love. This weekend we are asked to focus on vocation – the call to be what God really asks of us as Christian pilgrims, hearers and bearers of the Word.

**Scripture John 10:10**

I have come that they may have life and have it to the full

*Pause*

**Song Listen (Anaceto Nazareth)**

Listen let your heart keep seeking,

Listen to his constant speaking,

 Listen to the Spirit calling you.

 Listen to his inspiration,

 Listen to his invitation

 Listen to the Spirit calling you.

 He’s in the sound of the thunder in the whisper of the breeze.

 He’s in the might of the whirlwind in the roaring of the seas.

 He’s in the laughter of children, in the patter of the rain.

 He’s in the cry of the suffering, in their mourning and their pain.

*Pause*

**Reflection**

This past week we celebrated the Feast of Saint Catherine of Siena (1347 -1380). She was born during the Black Plague when 50 million died in Europe alone. Superstition and ignorance led people to find strange cures and remedies. They also needed someone to blame for this ‘*punishment’* from God. This led to the scapegoating of Jews in different ways. The rich took off to their country estates away from the cities leaving the poor and destitute to fend for themselves. The current crisis reminds us of the inequalities in the various health systems in the world against an indiscriminate infection. We are not helpless and should not be hopeless.

**Song Jesus, Hope of the World (Deanna Light/Paul Tate)**

Jesus, hope of the world,
Jesus, light in our darkness,
here we await you, O Master Divine.
Here we receive you in Bread and in Wine:
Jesus, hope of the world.

Come to us, O Son of God!
Come to us, O Son of Man!
Come, Son of God! Come, Son of Man!
Shepherd your people in love!

**Reflection**

Pope Francis speaking in General Audience on her Feast Day (29 April) offered this heartfelt prayer:

‘Today we celebrate the feast of Saint Catherine of Siena, Co-Patroness of Italy. This great figure of woman drew from communion with Jesus the courage of action and that inexhaustible hope that sustained her in the most difficult hours, also when everything seemed lost, and enabled her to influence others, also at the highest civil and ecclesiastical levels with the strength of her faith. May her example help each one to know how to unite with Christian coherence, an intense love of the Church to an effective solicitude in favour of the civil community, especially in this time of trial. I ask Saint Catherine to protect Italy during this pandemic; and to protect Europe, because she is a Patroness of Europe; may she protect the whole of Europe, so that it remains united. ‘

**Instrumental A Íosa Mhic Mhuire (Arr. Ronan McDonagh)**

*Pause*

**Quotation (Saint Catherine of Siena)**

“Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.”

Her most famous quote is apt in our current situation and can turn a feeling of helplessness into one of hopefulness. Catherine faced Popes and Kings and never gave up. Her action was always inspired by prayer – her communion with Christ was her spiritual ammunition. As we reflect on the Gospel of Vocation Sunday –‘ I have come that they may have life and have it to the full’ we ask God to help us discern what is asked of us at this time. We ask the Mother of Jesus who trusted in God’s will to support us as we advance from our cocoon into the people we are called to be. May we be ‘self-forgetful’ like St. Kevin about whom Seamus Heaney speculated (St. Kevin and the Blackbird).

 What are we called to do? What can we do? What are we going to do?

**Song Faithful Is The Lord Our King (Liam Lawton)**