



Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time
† Sunday 26th February 2017

In England and Wales

Cycle of Prayer – For Women throughout the World; For the Unemployed

Keynote: The tenderness and personal nature of God's compassion and love

The Prophet Isaiah 49: 14-15

So often the God of the Old Testament is said to be full of vengeance and wrath, but here the prophet shows us the true nature of God for the people were saying: "The Lord has abandoned me, the Lord has forgotten me". But Isaiah speaking God's word says: *'Does a woman forget her baby at the breast, or fail to cherish the son of her womb? Yes even if these forget you, I will never forget you.'* The prophet reveals the tenderness of the young mother with her child as the true image of the tenderness and intimate nature of God's love and mercy for each of us and for his people.

Responsorial Psalm 61 (62) – A song of confidence in God's love

First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians 4: 1-5

At the most basic, trust is at the very heart of any true and lasting relationship between human beings, whether it is simply an interpersonal friendship, or a business and commercial contract. The apostle reminds the community at Corinth that: *'People must think of us as Christ's servants, stewards entrusted with the mysteries of God. What is expected of stewards is that each one should be found worthy of his trust.'* It may be an opportunity to review our own trustworthiness, and also to ponder on the trust that God places in each of us as the *'stewards entrusted with the mysteries of God.'*

Gospel according to Matthew 6: 24-34

Jesus is still teaching his disciples about his way – the Law of the New Covenant: *'No one can be the slave of two masters: he will either hate the first and love the second, or treat the first with respect and the second with scorn. You cannot be the slave of both God and of money.'* Do we say we love God but then actually serve another master or mistress? At the same time we worry ourselves about so many things. How we look, what to wear, when and how much to eat or drink. Jesus has a message for us worriers too: *'Surely life means more than food, and the body more than clothing! Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more that they are... and why worry about clothing? Think of the flowers growing in the fields, they never have to work or spin; yet I assure you that not even Solomon in all his regalia was robed like one of these. Now if that is how God clothes the grass in the fields... will he not much more look after you men of little faith?'* So Jesus urges his disciples to have confidence in the personal and tenderness of God's love: *'So do not worry,' he says, 'about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. Each day has enough troubles of its own.'*

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Note: Ash Wednesday – Wednesday 1st March – Day of Fast and Abstinence.
Women's World Day of Prayer – Friday 3rd March – Am I Being Unfair to You? (Philippines)