

SUNDAY *Plus*

11th Sunday in Ordinary Time **Divine Office Week III** Year A

The power of touch



Helen Keller became both deaf and blind when nineteen months old.

I have just touched my dog. He was rolling on the grass, with pleasure in every muscle and limb. I wanted to catch a picture of him in my fingers, and I touched him as lightly as I would cobwebs; but lo, his fat body revolved, stiffened and solidified into an upright position, and his tongue gave my hand a lick! He pressed close to me, as if he were fain to crowd himself into my hand. He loved it with his tail, with his paw, with his


tongue. If he could speak, I believe he would say with me that paradise is attained by touch; for in touch is all love and intelligence...

You are so accustomed to light, I fear you will stumble when I try to guide you through the land of darkness and silence. The blind are not supposed to be the best of guides...

My hand is to me what your hearing and sight together are to you. In large measure we travel the same highways, read the same books, speak the same language, yet our

experiences are different. All my comings and goings turn on the hand as on a pivot. It is the hand that binds me to the world of men and women. The hand is my feeler with which I reach through isolation and darkness and seize every pleasure, every activity that my fingers encounter. With the dropping of a little word from another's hand into mine, a slight flutter of the fingers, began the intelligence, the joy, the fullness of my life.

Helen Keller, *The World I Live In*

Lord of compassion, send us as labourers into your harvest. Help us to heal, proclaim peace and bring hope to those who are harassed and helpless.  Amen.

Christ has no body

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

St Teresa of Avila (1515-1582)

There is a kind of seeing that is superficial, distracted and hasty, a way of seeing while pretending not to see. We can see without being touched or challenged by the sight. Then too, there is seeing with the eyes of the heart, looking more closely, empathising with the other, sharing his or her experience, letting ourselves be touched and challenged.

Pope Leo XIV



Feast of the week
Saturday 20 June

St Alban
(died c.300)

What does courage look like in an ordinary life? St Alban, Britain's first-recorded Christian martyr, was not a priest, scholar, or leader when he opened his door and sheltered a priest who was in danger during a time of anti-Christian persecution. Moved by the man's faith, he became a Christian himself. When soldiers arrived to arrest the priest, Alban exchanged cloaks with him and presented himself in his place. He was executed at what is now St Albans.

When the moment of testing came, Alban chose truth over fear, compassion over self-preservation. He stepped forward in another's place, not because he sought glory, but because he recognised the dignity of a fellow human being and the call of a God who asks us to love without counting the cost. The site of his martyrdom became one of the most important pilgrimage centres in medieval England.

READINGS

Today:
Exodus 19:2-6
Romans 5:6-11
Matthew 9:36 - 10:8

Monday:
1 Kings 21:1-16
Matthew 5:38-42

Tuesday:
1 Kings 21:17-29
Matthew 5:43-48

Wednesday:
2 Kings 2:1, 6-14
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

Thursday:
Ecclesiasticus
48:1-14
Matthew 6:7-15

Friday:
2 Kings 11:1-4,
9-18, 20
Matthew 6:19-23

Saturday:
2 Chronicles 24:17-25
Matthew 6:24-34

Next Sunday:
Jeremiah 20:10-13
Romans 5:12-15
Matthew 10:26-33