

Day 4 Wednesday 7th March 2018

Gospel reading is the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount. He's pointing out the heart of things: what's really important.

We've to keep coming to the heart of things.

Therefore we must keep coming to our hearts which are our deepest selves.

God is greater than anything I can view or aspire to but God is also in our little hearts.

The heart is a vulnerable place: sometimes we shield ourselves, but really we are called to live in our hearts.

Your heart and mine: our deepest selves.

John Henry Newman, an Anglican who became Catholic: heart speaks to heart.

He meant this about the extraordinary capacity he had to relate to others.

For Newman prayer being at the heart of Christianity.

St Francis Xavier going out with the love of Christ. With the Pearl-fishers St Francis he was the very soul of pity and understanding.

Peter Faber (Peter Favre). Shepherd boy from the French Alps. Very clever but got to Paris.

Best book written about him by Mary Purcell. He wasn't a very exciting person so he is known as The Quiet Companion.

He was the companion of St Francis Xavier. When Francis went to the East, Peter's main ministry was in Germany and he was appointed to go and dialogue with the Lutherans. Christianity was fractured and broken.

As a theologian missioned to meet the Protestants Peter Faber was very upset by the point-scoring that went on, which led to a greater split among Christians. He was upset about the tendency to seek to win arguments.

Years ahead of his time he asked "Can we not emphasize what unites us and then with love and understanding see what divides.

He felt if only Catholics could have love and concern for the reformers then things might be different.

The confession box was a special place where Peter Faber excelled.

In 1546 he died at the age of 40: a few years before St Francis Xavier.

Another person to whom the heart was important is Therese of Lisieux: patron of the missions along with St Francis Xavier. Therese's heart went out to the ends of the earth. Although in one place all her life, her heart reached out across the world.

The heart is universal. To live with and in our heart is to live with God. The simple way we do things is as universal and far-reaching as the mission of St Francis Xavier.

Through the heart that we have been given we can reach out too.

And the heart of God is Christ, opened up for us in faith

In St Francis Xavier's letters (which were huge long letters often made in 6 copies so as not to lose them) he wrote about the heart of God which gives everything to us.

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.