Surrender

As you might already have gathered, one of my ‘go-to’ prayers, these days more than ever, is “Lord, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things that I can, and the wisdom to know the difference”.

In these days of uncertainty, and, dare I say, global, political and sociological chaos (here and ‘everywhere’), it becomes all-too-easy (and often quite understandably) to ‘give-up-trying-or-caring’ about things beyond our control. I’d like to think that practicing Christians at least would never give up on prayer, in the belief and expectation that our prayers count; after all, we are a forgiven people and live in hope. Always.

If ever we’re stuck for an example (other than Jesus) about the power of prayers, based on faith and trust in Him, we need look no further than Mary - the ‘God-bearer’. When she was called by God she would have just been a teenager - betrothed but unmarried - so small wonder that we read that she was greatly troubled, somewhat shocked, and maybe fearful! Mary’s next response was to wonder “how”. Until she heard these words: '***The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God’***.

And then we’re told Mary’s final word on the subject … ***“I am the Lord's servant; may it be to me as you have said”***. In saying this, she was surrendering her future to God’s good purpose.

Buddhism and modern-day psychologists would call that ‘***surrender***’. But make no mistake - surrender (in this context) isn’t about ‘giving-in to the inevitable’. Nor is it thinking “what the heck, there’s nothing I can do about it anyway”. Mary’s surrender was **deliberately and knowingly** welcoming God into her life… with faith and trust in *’letting go”’ and “letting God*” take the lead.

Thought for the Week: God has never been in the business of asking anyone to do anything that’s beyond their strength and courage, because He (through the Holy Spirit within us all) is the very source of that strength and courage. So, to my way of thinking, Mary’s surrender is all about courage and faith, and nothing at all to do with blind obedience, nor resignation to the inevitable. At which point I mention again the prayer about “Give me serenity (in adversity), courage to do what I must, and wisdom to get it right’

Can we truly claim to surrender ourselves to God’s will? Either way, I’d offer this prayer:

Help me to count it an honour to be your servant, and an honor to be asked to serve you in a particular way.

Help me to serve with joy, and not with fear, or a grudging or complaining attitude.

Help me to be a servant of whom you can be proud.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

- We can choose the easy way,
  - or not.
- We can choose to surrender ‘all the we have, all that we are, and all that we hope to be' to God,
  - or not
- Mary’s decision was very clear! May our decisions over the following days and month also be based on hope, not fear of uncertainty.