

# *The Closeness of God (feast of St Joseph)*

Reflection based on Luke Ch 2 v 40-50



This beautiful image is taken of a painting by Sr Annie Bromham IBMV based on Luke ch 2 40-50. Sr Annie painted it specially for the Pastoral Care Project. She has kindly loaned us the painting until such time as we have the funds to buy it.

We have used this print as part of our presentations in two schools and they have been deeply touched by it and will be using a print of it for their Prayer Board.

We have more schools to visit during the Week of Prayer 12-19th March as well as parishes so we are looking forward to receiving contributions of prayers and reflections to add to those printed on page 2 and 3.

Prints of the painting in a display mount are available to purchase from the Pastoral Care Project for £9.99 plus postage & packing.

Tel: 01675 434035 or email: [info@pastoralcareproject.org.uk](mailto:info@pastoralcareproject.org.uk)



## **The Closeness of God** – based on Luke Ch 2. 40-50 (Extract from a feature in Catholic Today March 2014 )

In 'The Prayer of The Holy Family' book of reflections by Father Livinus Donohoe, O.C.D. he brings home to us the closeness of God. "*When you talked to Him (Jesus) you were looking into the human eyes of God*" [here](#)



Fr Livinus invites us to see the gospel of Luke Ch 2 v 40-50 differently.

How - what does Joseph teach us today about the responsibility of caring – a husband caring for his wife; or a son caring for his mother?

Pondering Mary and Joseph's experience will surely connect with many parents/guardians who have found themselves in a situation of when a child went missing, but what happens when an elderly person with dementia whom you are responsible for suddenly wanders off – lost?

How can we respond to the needs of the family as they support the person who has dementia, and so prevent them becoming isolated?

The Week of Prayer and Awareness of Dementia 12-19<sup>th</sup> March is an invitation to look again at the person with dementia, despite dementia causing forgetfulness they are receptive to the Holy Spirit, and often share this love with those around them. Many of them remember prayers and find the rhythm of the mass helps them to live in the present moment. Like you and me they too need help to feel the closeness of God - what can we do?

We are privileged at the Pastoral Care Project to have accompanied many people with dementia and their loved ones on their spiritual/sacramental journey - they are the inspiration for this week of prayer and their experiences have helped us in producing resources which others can benefit from.

We wish to thank Archbishop Bernard Longley for his continued support and prayers, along with the many bishops nationally, clergy and religious orders and also Bishop David McGough, lead bishop to the Pastoral Care Project, especially for sharing his own personal story (Catholic Today Jan 2014).

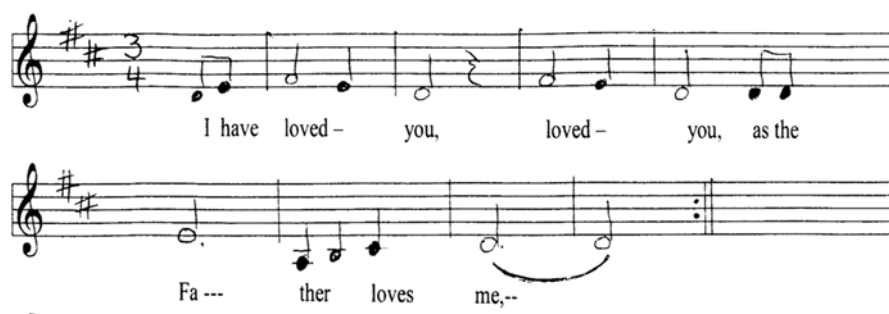
Our heartfelt thanks go to Cardinal Vincent Nichols for his continued encouragement, and for contacting the Project to say that he is supporting the Week of Prayer and Awareness 12-19<sup>th</sup> March; the Cardinal will be offering Mass on 18<sup>th</sup> March in his private chapel. This generous gift of the Mass and his kindness and concern will surely touch the lives of so many in a very special way.

Excerpt from the Reflection - The Closeness of God.  
Based on the painting and Luke Ch 2 v 40-50

Joseph, how did you feel when you realised Jesus was missing?  
You knew how it felt to be overshadowed by the sense of guilt...  
The litany of 'if only' recited to the tune of hope...hope ebbing away when suddenly  
you and Mary together see Him....  
Jesus is in the Temple!

*"I feel a flood of emotions...  
welling up within me...  
I see Jesus as he looks to His mother.  
Her hand goes out to hold him...  
I feel the tears running down my beard.  
I thought the situation with Herod was difficult, the flight into Egypt,  
but back then we could lift Jesus up and hold him.  
Now the roles are reversed.  
It is not us who are holding Jesus...  
It is Jesus who is holding us...  
in the Father's love...  
Nothing compares to this moment."*

**'I have loved you'** based on John Ch 15v9 Glenys Roberson - Pastoral Care Project ©



I have known you in your isolation,  
and met you in your darkest place.  
No wall can separate us  
or keep you from my grace.  
I'll be the thread that joins you  
to those you've loved and lost;  
and in those I've sent to see you  
you'll feel the Father's love.

*Refrain*

The above words came from a Day of Reflection led by the  
Pastoral Care Project for Communitas Project, Birmingham.

Copies of the print and reflection can be ordered from the  
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