

Belonging

4th class had a lovely assembly – had a look at the whole subject of friendship.

During prayers at the end they asked us to think of people who are lonely.

When you are lonely you feel that you don't belong

Other people have friends – you don't

Other people are having fun – you aren't

We all need to feel that we belong

We all need to feel that we matter

We all need to feel that we are loved.

I want to bring those ideas of belonging, of what matters to us to our reading – people were often trying to trip Jesus up with difficult questions. Remember Israel was occupied territory and people resented the Romans who were in charge.

They asked Jesus – ‘Should we pay taxes?’

Jesus said give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar – and give to God the things that belong to God. In other words decide what is important to you, decide ‘Who do I belong to?’

What does it mean when I say that I belong to God?

We come back to what 4th class were thinking about – love, loyalty, friendship. God has shown his love for us – we need to think of how we love .

At one point Jesus was asked what he thought were the most important commandments

Love God

Love your neighbour.

There is a story of one of Jesus’ followers, John, when he was an old man would say to all he met, ‘Little children, love one another.’ When he came to die he was the last living member of that group of disciples that Jesus called to follow him. As he lay dying, those around him asked him what was his message to the Church. He said simply, ‘Little children, love one another.’ John is there nothing more you would like to say. The old man smiled and simply said ‘Little children, love one another.’

A vital way of showing our love for God is to share that love with others.

Starting with 4th Class assembly and their thoughts on friendship and loneliness, we've been talking about belonging. Trust, loyalty, listening. The more I have come to know about God, the more I have come to know about Jesus, the more I have come to discover in my own life that he is one who listens, listens when I am worried or sad, listens when I am happy. He is one I have learned to trust; he is one who stays with me even when I seem to forget him.

I discover, in the words of a song,

Now I know He is mine I am His forever
He is leading me along life's way

In discovering that, I discover that the one who loves me, is calling me to love those around me.

We belong to him – and we belong to each other.