

Just back off our holidays caravanning in France – vital bit of equipment these days is Satellite Navigation.

Always looking out to see if I am on the right track.

- knows if I have gone off course – works out ways to get me back on track.

With this I now have confidence to drive into places I would never have tackled in the past. This year we drove into the centre of the city of Lyon, last year we tackled Paris – meant we were able to find our way back to our campsite.

We are all at different stages of life – some of you have just started a new school. Some of you are facing changes this year – parents choosing new schools – which one will be best for our youngsters.

All involves change – change can be both exciting and confusing – moving from National School to secondary school – suddenly we are the small fish in the big pool – new subjects – whole range of new teachers, different ways of doing things – takes time to adjust, to get our bearings.

Need to know we have help staying on the right track. We have parents, friends – we will get all sorts of advice from TV, magazines. We also have the faith you have learned here, at home and at school – the teachings of Jesus and this whole funny business of prayer – talking to God, listening to God.

Some of you will be thinking of Confirmation this year, you will be coming along to Youth Club. In the course of preparing for Confirmation (we will announcing the plans for classes once we hear from the Archbishop on the date of the Service) Stephen and I will be exploring this whole idea of prayer, of God as someone we can go to for guidance, for strength, for help and understanding.

This is where the similarity with this Sat Nav breaks down. This machine will keep on giving me instructions – but it does n't really care whether I follow them or not. The passage we read as our Gospel reading contain two parables Jesus tells about searching. At one level they are just about someone looking for something they have lost – a shepherd has lost a sheep, a woman has lost a coin. These parables are also powerful reminders that the God we are listening to, looking for, trying to understand is also looking for us – looking out for us when things are going well – looking out for us when things are going haywire, when we make mistakes, when we get things wrong, when we are feeling a bit hurt and confused – this same God will never give up.

The person who wrote the Psalms had a real insight into this. I am just going to finish with a portion from the longest psalm of them all, Psalm 119.

**Ps119:105-112** (*The Message*)

**By your words I can see where I'm going; they throw a beam of light on my dark path.**

I've committed myself and I'll never turn back from living by your righteous order. Everything's falling apart on me, GOD; put me together again with your Word.

**By your words I can see where I'm going; they throw a beam of light on my dark path.**

Festoon me with your finest sayings, GOD; teach me your holy rules. My life is as close as my own hands, but I don't forget what you have revealed.

**By your words I can see where I'm going; they throw a beam of light on my dark path.**

The wicked do their best to throw me off track, but I don't swerve an inch from your course. I inherited your book on living; it's mine forever— what a gift! And how happy it makes me!

**By your words I can see where I'm going; they throw a beam of light on my dark path.**

I concentrate on doing exactly what you say— I always have and always will.

**By your words I can see where I'm going; they throw a beam of light on my dark path.**