

Thought for the day Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020.

By Sandra Collins

Whilst we have been in 'lockdown' our family meet together once a week virtually of course for a quiz. It is a light hearted way in which to have some fun and have the opportunity to 'see' family members. It is my turn to set the questions for this week and one involves the song 'Be our guest' this is a well known song from the film Beauty and the beast when on arriving at the castle Belle is invited to dine.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=afzmwAKUppU>

It brought to mind the lectionary reading from last Sunday from Luke ch 24 when Jesus joined Cleopas and his companion as they travelled on the road to Emmaus. This passage seems to have been prominent in people's thoughts over the last week and there are many ways in which to explore it. Here is one train of thought you might wish to consider. After walking and talking with Jesus, whom they had not recognised the two travellers invited Jesus to stay with them over night to in effect to 'be our guest.'

Throughout his ministry Jesus stayed in people's homes and they often shared a meal together. Below are two familiar examples from scripture:

*Luke 10: 38 As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him.*

*Luke 19: 5-6 <sup>5</sup>When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." <sup>6</sup>So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.*

At the moment we are all very aware that we cannot invite people to 'be our guest' or indeed visit others. At times it feels that we are living in a virtual world where we meet family and friends via telephone calls and computer links. I am thankful for the technology (with a little help from my family) that enables us to communicate with others and eases the isolation in which we find ourselves at present. On Thursday evenings we stand on our doorsteps to clap our hands in recognition for those who are working on our behalf to stock up shelves in our supermarkets and to provide medical help for those in need, and many other jobs needed to be done each day, we can at a safe distance engage in conversation with our neighbours. When out walking I have noticed that strangers are often eager to exchange a few words grateful to have the chance to pass the time of day with those they meet.

We welcomed Jesus into our hearts and into our lives when we made the commitment to follow Him. And we give thanks for His presence knowing he is with us always.

I look forward to the day when we can again open the doors of our churches to welcome brothers and sisters in faith and to welcome the visitor as we meet to praise and worship God.

Hymn Singing the Faith 409 Let us build a house - All are welcome.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3Pb77ylz\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3Pb77ylz_Q)

1 Let us build a house where love can dwell  
and all can safely live,  
a place where saints and children tell  
how hearts learn to forgive.  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,  
rock of faith and vault of grace ;  
here the love of Christ shall end divisions :  
*All are welcome,  
all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.*

2 Let us build a house where prophets speak,  
and words are strong and true,  
where all God's children dare to seek  
to dream God's reign anew.  
Here the cross shall stand as witness  
and as symbol of God's grace ;  
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus :

3 Let us build a house where love is found  
in water, wine and wheat :  
a banquet hall on holy ground  
where peace and justice meet.  
Here the love of God, through Jesus,  
is revealed in time and space ;  
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us :

4 Let us build a house where hands will reach  
beyond the wood and stone  
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,  
and live the Word they've known.  
Here the outcast and the stranger  
bear the image of God's face ;  
let us bring an end to fear and danger :

5 Let us a build a house where all are named,  
their songs and visions heard  
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed  
as words within the Word.  
Built of tears and cries and laughter,  
prayers of faith and songs of grace,  
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter :

Marty Haugen (*b.* 1950)

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How many people Jesus met!  
He loved them all.  
He healed the sick.  
He told them of God's love and care.  
Good news for all the people Jesus met.

How many people we all meet!  
Help us Lord to love.  
Help us to be true friends.  
Help us to share our love for God.  
Good news for all the people we meet.

Thank you, God, for simple acts of kindness when human love reaches out towards human need.

With gentle gratitude we remember:

the person who calls next door every day to check on their neighbour, to do their bits of shopping, and to make sure they are well.

The nurses and medical staff who, after the demanding work on the hospital ward, goes home to look after their families.

The stranger we engage with however briefly.

We thank you God for all the people we never notice, but who with quietness and grace, do the work of Christ. **Amen.**

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