

Sarum Pause for Reflection: Learning to Walk



Peter asked Jesus: just how often did he need to make it up with a colleague who kept making mistakes, letting everyone down, then saying sorry – seven times maybe? ‘No,’ said Jesus: ‘more like 70 x 7.’ Matthew 18:21-22

A mother will on occasion let her child make mistakes, like falling over and crying – so that the child learns. Because she loves the child, she will not let a situation get out of hand and become really dangerous. Admittedly, earthly parents don’t always get it right: sometimes children do get hurt and die. Our heavenly mother Jesus, however, always makes the right calls.

(Julian of Norwich, ‘A Revelation of Love’ Chapter 61)

Prayer

Jesus, my kind, resourceful,
dearest mother,
have mercy on me.

I’ve messed up – I am a mess!
and I don’t take after you at all.
I can’t put things right,
I don’t know where to begin,
except in this:
by asking You
for the help only You can give.

Amen

Julian of Norwich

Reflection

“I never thought a Red Kite could look cute,” observed my walking companion, as we watched two birds of prey playing in a windswept sky above the Chilterns scarp.

For several minutes they practised the near-vertical dive and the last-minute dodge out of the way, alternating roles of attack and defence. Quite a dangerous game, requiring dexterity and split-second timing. Then we realised: plumage identical, but one bird larger than the other – what we were watching was a flying lesson.

It’s that time of year: raptors give their offspring flying lessons; swans give cygnets swimming lessons, etc. The youngsters don’t always get it right! And on the Way of God’s Love, we are all toddlers.

Action

Towards evening – before tiredness sets in – for many people is a good time to sit down with our heavenly parent and review the day: to see what went well (and give thanks) and where we could have done better (‘fess up, move on). In a monastery, the General Confession – saying sorry to God and to our brothers & sisters – is not during a morning service: it is in the evening, at the start of Compline, which is the last liturgical act of a day.