

Thought for the Week
9th February 2020
Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Today's second reading suggests we do something that anyone who has ever had to deliver a speech or lesson to an audience, will most definitely disagree with. Perhaps. St Paul admits taking on preaching and sermons with '*great fear and trembling*'. He clearly did not consider himself to be a good speaker at all. I would like to think that perhaps he himself may not have fully understood the messages he preached and admits to not '*relying on arguments that rely on philosophy*'. He set out to simply demonstrate the power of the spirit to tell his audience what God had guaranteed.

St Paul allowed himself to be vulnerable, to set aside any learning or research and thus be open to share his life with Jesus, as it was. In this day and age, we do everything to avoid exposing our own vulnerabilities, because this is seen as a weakness. We cover up our true selves, perhaps to impress our audience or to protect ourselves against those who may use this against us. Sadly it is the way of the world - one must meet certain criteria to get into various circles of life; educated to a certain level, speak and dress appropriately, discriminated against for the slightest difference, as set by society. I think we should acknowledge this.

The context and audience certainly matters and far from being an impediment to sharing what knowledge we have of God's promises - we must grab every opportunity to do so- we all need constant reminders to see ourselves as God sees us, and thus overcome our vulnerabilities in the full knowledge of the power of the Spirit within us- if we let the Spirit guide us.

From last week's readings on the Presentation of the Lord, we heard how Simeon prophesied that Jesus would be a sign that would be rejected, despite being the sign of liberation and peace. And so it is likely that any sharing we do will bring about philosophical debate - if we can, let us draw on the power of the Spirit within us- to speak of our own experience of seeing the hand of God working in our lives.

A parishioner