

**Thought for the week**  
**17<sup>th</sup> February 2019**  
**6th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

This week it's been much easier to think that Spring is on its way. The snow has gone, the crocuses and snowdrops are in full bloom and the evenings and mornings are noticeably lighter.

The gardeners are sowing seeds and planning their planting for the year. Some plants (and most weeds!) grow easily and seem to thrive even in difficult conditions. My daughter has lived in Australia for several years and loved the frangipani trees that grew well in the suburbs of Sydney. She wants to grow one here, now that she has returned, but the climate in Sonning Common is not ideal and to achieve her wish may take special efforts.

Plants need a good start and a well developed root system in order to flourish and withstand bad weather and attack by pests and diseases. As followers of Christ we need a faith rooted in God. The gift of our faith enables us to stand up for what is just, both for ourselves and others. It's value lies in its constancy – it helps us to be humble in times when life is going well and fortifies us when we meet difficulties.

Rudyard Kipling's poem "*If*" frequently features in lists of favourite poems and has a similar theme...

*"If you can dream - and not make dreams your master; If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim, If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster And treat those two impostors just the same..."*

Source: <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/if-by-rudyard-kipling>

Breaking news.....Cardinal John Henry Newman is closer to being canonised after a second miracle in his name was confirmed by the Pope.

Two authenticated miracles are required before sainthood and Newman, who was already credited with curing a man's spinal disease, is now said to have healed a woman's unstoppable bleeding.

The Birmingham Oratory announced Pope Francis' decree with "*great joy*"