

In commenting on Sunday's readings there was a lovely line that seemed to fit today, too. It's from Veronica Holyhead:

We can say nothing more moving about human beings than that they call each other to life. (p.66 *Welcoming the Word*, Year C)

It's a sentence worth pondering on in the light of, not only Matthias's election to the twelve, but of Pope Leo's recent election, too – and our own. The deeper dynamic of our calling is one of love; of an intimacy with Christ and one another that calls each of us to life – life, that is, not as a burden but as a joy; not simply one of dull obedience but of liberation, freeing us to be who we are today with all our differences and weaknesses accepted, put in their place, as it were, by friendship. This doesn't mean a benign approval of everything we do or is done to us but an acceptance that we can work through the challenges of our differences and weaknesses knowing that there is a deeper dynamic or agency at work whoever we are and whatever might happen. This is Jesus remaining with us and our remaining in him, despite his death and despite our own. We are talking, then, of a resurrected life and a resurrected way of living. We thought we were lost, without friends, isolated, with no future worth living, and yet *here I am among you* calling you back to life, to friendship, to the commandment or, better perhaps, the *invitation* to love. We are invited into a life of love, impossible if cut off from the source of life and love. Love is that impossible command made possible in Christ. This is the underlying dynamic that Austen Ivereagh was struggling to convey in all the shenanigans that surround the election of a pope. Yes, it's an all-male hierarchical proceeding which the world tries to bet on by considering all the political manoeuvrings and personality traits of candidates but the choice is hopefully not based on this human way of reckoning alone but on an experience of resurrection. Matthias is chosen because he knows what it is to live a resurrected life. It's our call too, so that we, in our turn, call each other to life.

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