



25 August 2017

Letter 26 / 17

Dear Parishioners

“Whatever!” was the answer given to me after speaking to a family friend. After switching off my cell phone, it did not bother me immediately, as to how short his answer was. I just said to myself, *“Perhaps I phoned at the wrong time, or maybe there is something else on his mind?”*

However, I felt a little restless within myself and was still thinking about his one-word answer later that morning. Trying to make sense of the earlier experience on the phone and having simply asked his opinion about something that we have to do together later this year, I thought of giving him a call back to ask him if he was okay. I was just about to phone him, and there, my phone was ringing. It was him..., apologising for his short answer and then going on a long trip lamenting about how he was not in a good space when I phoned. We eventually ended up talking and listening to each other for almost ten minutes about things in life that we can't always get, but really want. At the end of our conversation I was more at peace and was able to make sense of the *“Whatever!”*

I am always warned by those who are closest to me, not to think too much into things. At one point I was told that I'm suffering from *“overthink sickness.”* Personally, I don't think it's true. But what I do know is that I can get carried away by my own thoughts at times.

Anyway, the whole thing of not getting what you really want is worth thinking or reflecting on. I know from my own personal journey, how I had to come to terms with not always getting what I wanted. I also experience it in my day to day encounters with others and, at the same time, need to watch the responses within myself and others if things don't turn out the way they are expected to. I have seen how giving up on oneself and others, allows disbelief, disappointment and despair to creep in and ruin relationships precisely by not getting what one wants.

But I'm wondering, and here I'm not thinking (!) – I'm simply wondering if not getting what we want at times is really a bad thing. Maybe not getting what we want is what we desperately need. Eventually I suppose if we are willing / allowing ourselves to be gentle with ourselves and others and say it's okay when we do not get what we want, we will be much happier, and a much stronger and compassionate person will emerge.

This is all for now.

With love,
Selwyn