

When Rachel was in Year 8 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Form in old money -  
she combined a craft and history project by  
weaving and embroidering the Bayeux Tapestry, as you do.  
Fifty years on it hangs in our bedroom making me wonder.  
The bit she chose depicts Harold's demise,  
arrow in eye with the Latin inscription:

HAROLD REX INTERFECTUS EST

King Harold has been killed; perfect tense: end of.

Had I done the embroidery,  
more lives than Harold's would undoubtedly been lost.

But I'd have tried to lighten things with this inscription:

NE TURBATOR; NICTA ET HOC VIAM ELABORABIT

Don't be troubled, just blink and it'll work its way out.

Accompanied by Harold's men trilling the 1966 Beatles hit  
900 years before its time, *We can work it out!*

Another scene depicts Bishop Odo of Bayeux

ODO EPISCOPUS BACULUM TENENS  
COMFORTAT PUEROS

Bishop Odo, wielding a club, **comforts** the boys.

He's mustering the troops, beating them into battle,  
clubbing those waverers who've had second thoughts.

Odo sounds like my sort of bishop.

But I'm intrigued by the word **comfort**,

which we tend to connect with

cotton wool and Radox bath salts and reclining chairs.

Jesus describing his spirit as Comforter

on this WhitSunday

makes us feel warm inside,

Jesus consoling and affirming yours truly

so maligned and misunderstood and afflicted.

But maybe Jesus is taking his cue from Bishop Odo  
co-strengthening, disturbing us to do some great work,  
to make some great conquest  
which will be remembered a millennium on  
by girls in Sheffield doing history projects.  
Not to mention my first-day cover of the Bayeux tapestry,  
stamps galore franked Hastings 14 October 1966.

Jesus' spirit has been urging you on for ages  
to do something big.

Comforted by his gentlest club piercing your thick skull,  
this Whit Sunday just go for it.

As God went for it.

CHRISTUS REX NON INTERFECTUS EST SED VIVET

Christ the King is not dead but lives.

As we, thrilled by God's spirit, shall be changed

in a moment, at the **blinking** of an eye, at the last trumpet...