

Mr Nixon, the saintly head of our rural primary school decided to take his Year 5/6 class to London for a week. Some children had never been to York, let alone London, so it was some adventure, costing us £5, a princely sum in 1967. To raise interest, Mr Nixon led an evening for parents, enthusing about the itinerary, accompanied by colour slides. ‘Now, any questions?’ he asked, having poured his heart out. My mother immediately stuck her hand up: ‘Mr Nixon, will our David pass his eleven plus?’

James and John must have squirmed as their mum butted in. ‘Jesus, let moi bois be your right hand and left hand men when you draw up your kingdom cabinet.’

Jesus’ response notwithstanding, that it is God’s call not his, that sharing Jesus’ cup entails sharing in his sacrificial death, my heart goes out to Mrs Zebedee.

First, she believed in Jesus 100%, that he was going to get there.

She didn't see him as some crazy revolutionary peasant,  
who had brain-washed her boys into leaving their fishing trade.  
She worshipped him as king of kings and lord of lords.

Secondly, she wasn't ambitious for herself, but for others.

We should go for other-promotion rather than self-promotion  
loving our neighbour and our enemy as ourselves.

When Jesus told us to love our enemies,  
he was good enough to give us relations to practice on!

Mrs Zebidee practised on her sons.

As *Very Richi Sunak* and *Liz Surgical Truss*

insanely seek to drink from the terrible cup of power,  
our Gospel for St Jamestide poses an interesting question.

Who would you ask Jesus to sit at his right and left hand?

After all, we do canonise people, promote those  
champions of life and faith to the communion of saints.

The Irish church wanted to canonise a priest who'd died young.

The thing was, the lad was always terribly late for every Mass

because he stopped en route and talked and listened to folk,

gutted by their concerns, making them feel really special.

So special, they wanted to make him a saint

because he made them feel like a saint.

The medieval church had Mary, champion of grace and kindness

sitting beside Jesus, staying his hand when he got a bit cross.

As your personal heroes whisper sweet everythings in Jesus ear,

what would you expect them to achieve?

The penny dropped for James after his mum's intervention,

called by Jesus not to be served but to serve, even unto death.

Which is why tens of thousands walk across Europe to his tomb

at Santiago de Compostela, eager to catch his humble habit.

At the end of the day all is pilgrimage, all is Buen Camino,

be it Mr Nixon's London, St James' Santiago, or Jesus' Heaven.

And worry not: baptised into his death you'll all pass Jesus' 11+.