



8-14 May 2022 • Faith 24/7
Victory in Europe Day 8 May

Perseverance

Revelation 7.9-17

John sees a vision of the throne of God, surrounded by a multi-cultural gathering of worshippers. An official in the vision explains to him that these people have been tested and suffered for their faith, but that throughout it all, Jesus has guided and protected them.

Now read Revelation 7.9-17 see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

The churches in Asia Minor for whom John was writing were experiencing persecution because of their faith – it must have been tempting for them to give up and try to fit in with the world around them. The vision John shares is an encouragement to keep going. The reference to the crowd of worshippers reassures them they are not alone and the image of Jesus, which draws on Psalm 23, comforts them in their times of hardship.



Have there been times in your life where you have had to just keep going?



God has given each of us different skills and we sometimes need others to help us through when a task seems too big for us. This week, offer your skills to someone who is struggling and needs help. Think about the times God has provided another person to help you through something difficult.



In the reading, God promises to shelter and protect his worshippers. Make a simple umbrella using a cup-cake holder, a pipe cleaner and PVA glue. Simply flatten the cup-cake holder and then fold it in half. Fold it in half again and then open it out. Make a small hole at the centre of the cross you have created with your folds and push the pipe cleaner through the hole, so that only a few millimetres poke out on the other side. Shape the pipe cleaner to look like an umbrella handle. Glue it into place. Umbrellas can protect us from both the sun and the rain. How does God protect us from the difficulties of life?



Not everything that God asks us to do or to face is easy. It is through the hard times that we have to persevere. One of the ways we do this is to learn to put our failures behind us and try again. Set a bowl on a table and see whether you can bounce a ping pong ball into it. If this is too easy, try using a smaller bowl or a cup. How many times in a row can you bounce the ball into the container?

WATCH



VE (Victory in Europe) Day is on 8 May. Watch the video: <https://www.ssafa.org.uk/support-us/our-national-campaigns/ve-day-76/ve-day-stories/norman-lewis-ve-day> or read Norman Lewis' story. What was it that kept Norman going during the war? Can you imagine what his parents felt on his return home? God gives us hope that our future will be better than our present, so that we can persevere when times get tough.



Some problems in the world won't be solved overnight, but in Psalm 122 we're encouraged to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. God wants us to persevere in prayer, even if we don't see immediate results. Think of a difficult situation and commit to praying for it at the same time every day this week. Perhaps set a reminder on your phone. Does praying this way change the way you think about prayer, or yourself?



Please continue to pray for Olga, Orest and their three children as they make their way to Worcester.

Pray for Ukraine

Just a thought... Sometimes we

behave as if caring for the sheep is enough, and anything beyond that it is someone else's problem. Or, to put it another way, do we work to challenge and change unjust structures, or do we respond only to the pastoral issues that they tend to cause? Of course, there is nothing wrong with doing the latter. We are called to serve and care for one another, especially for those in need, those who are the poorest, who are on the fringes of what we might regard as 'normal' society, those who are persecuted and so on. The question is, is that enough?

Sticking with the sheep metaphor: caring for sheep is more than 'search and rescue'. Yes, it is or can be that. And the gospel stories about finding lost sheep encourage us to think about that in a human context.

But caring for sheep also requires mending fences and anticipating problems further down the line, so that the sheep do not have to face the same risks again. Being a shepherd is more than tending to pastoral problems; it is about fixing structural things that are not right or not working. How well are we doing?

Psalm 23 from The Message

GOD, my shepherd!
 I don't need a thing.
 You have bedded me down in lush meadows,
 you find me quiet pools to drink from.
 True to your word,
 you let me catch my breath and send me in the right direction.
 Even when the way goes through Death Valley,
 I'm not afraid
 when you walk at my side.
 Your trusty shepherd's crook makes me feel secure.
 You serve me a six-course dinner right in front of my enemies.
 You revive my drooping head;
 my cup brims with blessing.
 Your beauty and love chase after me
 every day of my life.
 I'm back home in the house of GOD for the rest of my life.

Daily Readings for week commencing 9 th May, 2022		
Monday	Exodus 32: 1-14	Luke 2: 41-end
Tuesday	Exodus 32: 15-34	Luke 3: 1-14
Wednesday	Exodus 33	Luke 3: 15-22
Thursday	Exodus 34: 1-10,27-end	Luke 4: 1-13
Friday	Exodus 35: 20-36:7	Luke 4: 14-30
Saturday	1 Corinthians 4: 1-7	John 15: 9-17 <i>St Matthias</i>

Pray for those in need... Please pray for the people of Ukraine...for those in need of God's healing touch...Heather, Dorothy, Pat, Sue, Joyce, Maureen, Shane, Bryn, Katie-Lou, Margaret... **Please pray for those who mourn the loss of a loved one, remembering the souls of ...Pamela, Eric and Jane.**