

Homily 25 Sunday (B)

20 September 2015

What were you arguing about in the staff room? What were you arguing about at the governors' meeting? What do we argue about in our homes and with our families? What is it we always argue about? – jealousy and ambition, distrust, not totally sure that everyone is pulling their weight, wanting everybody to think that we're the best teacher, the best priest, the best governor ever.

At the beginning of term I went to the teacher training day to learn about preventing our young people from becoming radicalised, looking for tell-tale signs that might make our children vulnerable to extremist influences. This is not the appropriate moment to take a side-swipe at the government anti-terrorism strategy, but what I would say is that actually we could all do with a bit of radicalisation – getting back to our roots, getting back to fundamentals, getting back to Jesus.

Being a school governor is not just a nice hobby. Being a teacher is certainly not a stroll through the park. And being a Catholic Christian of any description is always going to be counter cultural and laying yourself open to misunderstanding and persecution.

Radicalisation, in the government's eyes, seems to be associated with violence. The violence that we must embrace is the violence of Jesus – the violence of delivering ourselves into the hands of men. The violence of making ourselves the last of all and servant of all, the violence of giving ourselves away in love, the violence of peacemakers, come what may, the violence of prayer, storming the gates of heaven until we finally attain our end.

This is also Mission Sunday and there's a message from Cardinal Vincent and the Bishops for you at the back of the church. Mission, evangelisation, radicalisation, it all boils down to the same thing – being more like Jesus, dying with Jesus, rising with Jesus, not just coming to Mass, but breathing the Mass and living the Mass.

Fr Michael