

## AUTHORITY

When Our lord Jesus Christ spoke about forgiveness his teaching made a deep impression. When from the pain of the crucifixion Our Lord Jesus Christ lived forgiveness then his teaching changed the nature of reality. With one there was a change of the argument; the discussion, with the other there was a change of life.

There is a priest working in Kenya called Fr Tony Clarke who trained for the priesthood with me at Ushaw College. When we were at college I was a trendy Lefty and Tony was seen as slightly to the right of Margaret Thatcher. So it was not uncommon for us to argue about the finer points of theology or Liturgy.

Tony worked with the Luo people about 80 miles from where I was based and on one of the rare occasions that I visited him I found that he was sharing his house with a Luo priest who was dieing of AIDS. Tony had been to visit this man and upon finding him in an awful mess took him home and cared for him until he died.

When Fr Clarke spoke theology I am afraid his teaching did not make a deep impression on me.

However when I saw him caring for this man whose body was experiencing the crucifixion of HIV AIDS the real depth of his Christian faith spoke with an authority which humbled my own arrogance and put into context our petty squabbles about the Latin mass.

The teaching of the catholic faith is so much deeper than words.

Each of you is by rite of your baptism a teacher of the catholic faith. Some of you have the awesome responsibility of being parents with the deep teaching role which that involves.

Words are not enough.

If you are to teach forgiveness you must live forgiveness, of self and others.

Giving to charity is not enough; you must give of yourself even to the extent of sacrifice.

Proclaiming your faith is not enough; you must trust to God your children, your life, even your ambition and let go.

The teaching of Jesus made a deep impression.

The life of Jesus changed the nature of reality.

As Christians then it is not just what we say, but what we do.

If our teaching is to have real authority.

This authority will be a reflection upon what we do.

Not what we say.

Therefore let your words be an expression of your actions.

And your life be in Christ.