



07 June 2019

Letter S 17 / 19

Dear parishioners,

*“Somehow, I knew that there was more to spinning and weaving!”*

The two words, “*Spinning Yarns...*”, from the title of Susan Stougie’s book, had quite a big impact on me last Saturday. Perhaps the launch of her book was such an awesome experience that it transcended all expectations; not only for those who organised the event, but for everybody present.

However, it was the two words from her title that got hold of me in a pleasant way, and somehow framed almost all my thinking and doing this past week. I even went onto YouTube to watch a few clips on how to spin yarn on the spinning wheel. I thought to myself, “*as soon as Susan comes back from a well-deserved holiday, she has to teach me how to sit behind that wheel of hers...so that I can also spin*”

I suppose why I was drawn to the first two words of the title, “*Spinning Yarns...*”, was that the thought of it was speaking metaphorically to the very nature of my vocation as a priest. It helped me formulate a deeper understanding of what ministry and vocation is all about.

While I was watching a particular YouTube clip, I noticed how a novice tried to spin yarn until he eventually got it right. The yarn broke, and then the poor novice had to sort of twiddle the broken ends together and spin them rapidly to bind them, before continuing. I saw the frustration on his face, how he touched his aching ankle, making sure the wheel spun at proper speed. I then noticed how after a while, that his smile returned, and how he enjoyed listening to the satisfying sound the wheel made, and finally going along with a relaxing rhythm.

Watching all this, I said to myself, “*I knew that there was much more to spinning and weaving*”

So, this is what I got from the first two words of Susan’s title of her book and the watching of the YouTube clips. In spinning and weaving you are constantly faced with your own choices and taking responsibility for it. Whatever you are making, you have to live with the finished product. It is yours - you have made it; it is part of you. It did not come from somewhere else, and have no one to blame when something goes wrong.

It also teaches patience; how to be patient and gentle with ourselves and others. In our fragmented societies, our obsession with screens and e-technologies today; we have lost touch with our hands, the sensitivity of touching and feeling and just spending enough time with others. We have lost touch with life’s deepest realities and the very things that connect us to each other. I also think that somehow, spinning and weaving puts us in touch with both our limitations and our possibilities as human beings.

That’s why I think there is much more to it than just spinning and weaving. I’ll ask Susan more about it.

This is all for now.

With love,

*Selwyn*