

The Lord's Prayer

One of the language activities at the recent CHRISM Reflective Weekend was to look at different versions of the Lord's Prayer and to write our own if we felt so moved. Below is the offering of Jim Cummins, which deeply touched all of us. Jim's reply to my e-mail about including it sets the context admirably.

Rob. Thanks for the e-mail. It is only after some considerable hesitation that I send you this copy of the prayer you ask for. It was so much a thing of the moment, as I believe prayers should be. And I don't think it reads as well at all.

Since then I can thank God that in part at least the prayer has been answered and we have managed to get a licence and take off two loads of bullocks. So now, although we are still overstocked, we can now accommodate all that are left. Of course, our farm is only one very small part of a very large and complex system of food production. But isn't it ridiculous that the produce of the hungry world is being flown to this country and to other places like it to satisfy our greed while so much of our own production has to be destroyed.

It's enough to make you weep!

Yours, with all good wishes, Jim.

*Dear Dad,
You're in heaven? - and I'm talking to you?
So this must be heaven!
Greetings! It's good to be in touch.*

*Please can you make this more recognisable as Heaven? – It is, but we don't always see it.
You give us more food than we can eat – Thank you for that.
But so many of your people are hungry...
"Go, feed them", do I hear you say?
But look, Dad, I spend my life producing food
And I'm not allowed to move it; even to offer it.
I can't give it away, no matter how much people want it.
That's what makes it feel like hell.*

*"It is"? You mean heaven and hell are the same place?
I've come to that conclusion before
and yet I still don't really get it.
Oh! The Cross. The Cross – Good Heavens – oh Hell!
Sorry Dad. So, so sorry.
I blamed the French; I blamed the Jews, the Arabs, the terrorists...
And I am to LOVE them – all? I do, really – just a bit!*

*O.K. So – I love the Frogs and the Wogs, the kids and the Yids, the yobs and the nobs
And the Yanks? No Thanks! – oops, Sorry Dad.
If only they'd stop, I'd forgive.
I'd love to forgive – and be forgiven.*

*Don't tempt me Dad – I flip too easy
But when I flip – o.k. if I flip -
Pull me back again Dad - Please. You can do it.*