

27<sup>th</sup> July 2022

## Sunshine

**"The sun, centre and sire of light,  
The keystone of the world-built arch of heaven."**

Philip James Bailey, *Festus* (1813)

Friends came for dinner and brought us a gift – a bunch of flowers, big, full, bold sunflowers, which brightened up our hallway for days afterwards. I can't recall having sunflowers in our home before, and the glory of the effect lingered long after the flowers themselves have gone. Watching the *Tour de France* rolling through the French countryside, I love it when the camera pans across a field of sunflowers, bright, vibrant yellow, joyful. A vase of sunflowers in my home transports me right there – a ray of sunshine from a friend's gift; a glimpse of sunshine in a vase of sunflowers.

I once heard a political put-down (though I can't recall who said it or of whom): "He has the kind of personality that when he enters a room you get the impression two people have just left." Ouch! Better, therefore, is what Victor Hugo has one of his characters say in *Les Misérables*:

*In the morning, when he entered my room, I grumbled,  
but he was like the sunlight to me, all the same.*

We can't be perfect all the time, of course, and there will be times when people will grumble at us or about us. We may, indeed, grumble about ourselves – though I hope that no one will say of *us* that when we come into a room it feels like two people have left ... But surely there are times when we can bring light *into* a room, a glimpse, a ray of sunshine when it's needed. Might we be "like the sunlight" sometimes?

Today, let's ask ourselves a question: Can we bring sunshine into someone's life? Twee? No, I don't think so, because, in the darkness of world crises, political turmoil at home and personal tragedies of pain, loss or uncertainty, might it be the sunshine of our presence that could make a difference to someone we know? You'll know best where that's needed. You'll know best how to do it. You'll know best how to be, for a moment, the "centre and sire of light" in someone's life.

Go on! Let your sunshine brighten someone's day ...

### **A prayer for today**

*Lord, may the sunshine of my life bring new light to dark places,  
hope for the despairing and joy to the downcast, and all to your glory. Amen*