

## Thought for the week

### Gifts to the future

In the very same week that Sister Carole was elected by her fellow sisters to become Prioress at St Hilda's Priory, Whitby, she was diagnosed with cancer, and the prognosis was not good. Despite this, she accepted the challenge and continued in the role until her death approximately three years later. During this time, the Order needed to move. She was able to contribute towards the planning and building of a new priory and find worthy uses for the original one. She worked tirelessly towards this goal, although, like Moses, she was unable to enjoy the results of all her hard work.

Throughout her time in the Order, she taught and mentored many pupils and spent time helping to run an orphanage in Swaziland. She had no goods or wealth to leave behind but, in a humble and unassuming way, she left a living legacy as an inspiration to her fellow sisters and friends.

At Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee, her wish was that trees should be planted for the future. There may be a statue erected after her death, but the trees will be a living legacy along with the values she represented. Sometimes politicians are said to be considering what legacy they might leave behind. Surely to do this they must make the best use of present opportunities but with a long-term view. How legislation enacted now will affect our children and grandchildren is more important than how it will affect the party's chances at the next election! Similarly, a farmer can farm thinking only of an immediate return from the land, but a wise farmer will plan to 'plough something back' into the soil for the future, maybe planting trees for shelter for cattle or looking forward to more sustainable, nature-friendly farming.

In today's reading, we have a wonderful summary of Moses' legacy – and it's not about how many herds of goats or sheep he was passing on to his family. Instead, we read: 'Never since has there arisen a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face. He was unequalled for all the signs and wonders that the Lord sent him to perform...' He led the people, he gave them laws to order their society, he mediated with God on their behalf. Yet it was not his calling to lead them into the Promised Land – that was for someone else. Part of his legacy was passing on the responsibility to others.

In the passage from his letter to the Thessalonians, Paul speaks of being 'entrusted with the message of the Gospel'. He says, 'so deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you the Gospel but also our own selves'. What a commitment, and what a legacy he and the other apostles left behind for the Thessalonians and many others, including ourselves.

When we consider the legacy of Moses, as described in Deuteronomy, we cannot help but think of an even greater prophet who has since 'arisen in Israel'. Someone who, like Moses, knew God face to face and mediated between God and the people. This prophet was also the Saviour and Lord of all. And what a living legacy he left behind! A legacy that continues and does not come to an end.