**Views from the Pews Lent 3: Forgiveness**

George Herbert (1593-1633) was an English priest of the Church of England, born in Wales and living to the age of only 39. Over his short life he wrote some deeply devotional poems that can touch the heart like nothing else. None of his beautiful poems were published in his lifetime, but he sent them to a friend shortly before his death, with the instruction that if his friend thought the poems worth publishing, he should do so. Thankfully, they were published 1633, a few months after Herbert’s death. This is one of the best, worth long contemplation during Lent. Love is personified as a host inviting Herbert in to dine with him as a guest. ‘Love’ here, as in so much of George Herbert’s finest poems, is more or less synonymous with God. It conveys both Herbert’s deep humility in the face of undeserved salvation, and Christs’ tender understanding.

*Kim King*

Love bade me welcome. Yet my soul drew back

Guilty of dust and sin.

But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack

From my first entrance in,

Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,

If I lacked any thing.

A guest, I answered, worthy to be here:

Love said, You shall be he.

I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah my dear,

I cannot look on thee.

Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,

Who made the eyes but I?

Truth Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame

Go where it doth deserve.

And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?

My dear, then I will serve.

You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat:

So I did sit and eat.

George Herbert, 1633