

**"We are one global neighbourhood – intricately inter-related and completely co-dependent, woven together, like a tartan.**



Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton delivered this sermon/homily in the event for Their Majesties, the King and Queen, on the occasion of the [Presentation of the Royal Honours of Scotland](#).

"Your Majesties', look around you.

"Sisters and brothers, look around you – at this beautiful tapestry of humanity - Scotland.

"What we learn when we listen to one another, listen to understand, not just respond; is extraordinary.

"We gather to commit to and celebrate the common good of the place and people of Scotland.

"How depleted life would be without the creative imagination that explodes through our diverse customs and cultures, faiths and beliefs– the literature, the poetry, the music, the sacred searching, scientific insight and innovation, the beauty of life unleashed.

"We are a saga, not a short story, a symphony, not a solo.

"How narrow our sight, and how monochrome our understanding when we do not embrace the richness of different perspectives.

"We can't see round ourselves by ourselves, but need other human beings if we are to be what we were created to be – not just humans being, but humans becoming.

"The text we heard from the gospel of Matthew is from 'The Beatitudes' or 'sayings of extreme blessing'.

"The subtleties and nuance in the original language is hidden and makes it very difficult for us to understand.

"But another way to see this today is Jesus setting out his stall, announcing his manifesto – 'Blessed are' can mean 'this is what my vision looks like.' – this is what I will stand for, work for, offer my life for – this is what 'my kingdom coming' looks like in real time.

"Another translation is, 'you're on the right track if',

"The 'poor in spirit' – they are not weak or poor, the meek aren't doormats – no, they are the brave ones among us with a deep awareness that no one alone has all the answers.

"The ones of us who call us together to search for answers that elude us when we search from our one limited perspective.

"We need them more than ever today.

"And 'we're on the right track if' our people are brave enough, bold enough, empowered and hopeful enough to listen and learn from, and cherish, each other.

"To choose collaboration and trust over a fear-filled circling of our wagons.

"Sisters and brothers, look around you.

"We are one global neighbourhood – intricately inter-related and completely co-dependent, woven together, like a tartan.

"My kingdom-coming in real time comforts those who mourn – the death of someone, of course, but also the life snatched from them by war, oppression, climate chaos, systemic poverty that pulls them down like a whirlpool.

"There is no them and us, only us – and when one human being suffers, we all suffer.

"My kingdom coming means we comfort each other, welcome each other, cherish every human life – mercy and peace are not ideals to be domesticated or downgraded, they are not 'good to have's' but part of the fabric of our being.

"Are we on the right track?"

"This ancient text reminds us today that a bold vision like this is a tough and very often thankless task – calling for love when there is so much fear is not for the faint-hearted.

"But rejoice, it says, rejoice because it is worth it. Love is worth it.

"The psalm we heard read is a song, it's a poem.

"Concentrated imagery that speaks to the soul, whispers a truth beyond the words.

"The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims God's handiwork.

"This beautiful, formidable, yet fragile planet we call home, was here long before we were – and without words, it worships its God.

"Tides surge, plants push through the earth and bathe in the sun, luxuriating in it.

"Birds sing full-throated and animals have languages all their own.

"Are we too self-absorbed to hear them? Or have we sadly become too preoccupied to listen?"

"Blessed are we ... on the right track are we when we understand that the heavens and the earth are not commodities or possessions, we are part of it and called to cherish and protect it.

"Blessed are we, on the right track are we when we understand that our children do not inherit this earth from us – we have borrowed it from them.

"And it is our duty to return it still singing and surging and bathing, not baking to a crisp.

"Your Majesties, you have made it part of your mission to speak alongside creation; advocating for it.

"As we present the honours of Scotland to you, we commit ourselves to walking that journey with you.

"We are all a small part of something so much bigger - this beautiful, sacred creation and everyone and everything in it.

"Thanks be to God.

"Amen."