Read: Titus 3:1-7

In the letter from Paul to Titus we hear: *Remind your people that it is their duty to be obedient to the officials and representatives of the government; to be ready to do good at every opportunity*. This being Armistice Day, it is a good day to reflect on the extent to which we habitually do or don't fulfill our duties, not just in obeying the current Covid restrictions but in everyday matters; the degree to which we give our all to whatever we are called to by God, at any moment in our own particular state of life, regardless of our preferences.

The men and women of the armed forces whom we remember today have all given their lives in answering a particular call to duty which they heard. A very striking figure to recall is Captain Noel Gordon Chavasse, awarded two VC's in the First World War. He was a member of the Royal Army Medical Corps. He first won the Military Cross for spending 12 hours rescuing casualties at Ypres. He then won his first VC for saving around 20 men wounded on the Somme. He turned down the offer of relative safety in a surgeon's job, to remain "with the lads" in the front line. Following more extraordinary feats of valour, earning him his second VC, he died from dreadful injuries after his first aid post had been hit by a shell.

As with so many of those awarded the VC, his courage was not of the hot and impassioned sort, but of a calm kind that arose simply from a deep, deep, sense of self-giving duty. He famously wrote to his fiancee, shortly before he died, "Duty called, and called me to obey". Regardless of possible consequences, he was a man who stood up for what he thought was right, never being afraid to criticise his superiors for the sake of his men when he felt it called for. And for one of such immense personal stature and courage, he did not look down on others but was a man of immeasurable compassion; out of step with the current military thinking, he was one who argued that men suffering from shell shock should be treated and helped, not shot for cowardice.

When he went out into danger, time and time again, to treat, help and if possible rescue the wounded, he didn't stop to consider what sort of people they were; he was there for all of them. There is surely something very Christ-like in this action; Jesus too does not pick and choose to whom he offers help and salvation, for not one of us is worthy of it.

It is always our duty to bring Christ to our neighbour by offering every kind of help we are able to bring, whatever we might think of them.

St. Martin of Tours pray for us, that in every moment we may fulfill our duty of love to God and neighbour, regardless of inconvenience to us or any possible measure in our minds of 'worthiness' of the other.