

Friends

I am writing this at Alma Beacon as I start a night shift at the shelter. My shift is usually 10:30pm on Sunday to 7am on Monday and tonight I really didn't want to come out. It was a cold, wet night and I'm already tired. However, as I said to Mark, however much I don't want to come out, it is as nothing when compared to how much those who are on the streets don't want to sleep there.

I wonder, in these last few days before Lent, how many times Jesus didn't really feel like doing whatever it was that he had to do. We know of course that as he approached crucifixion, he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane: "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done." But I am wondering about the ordinary days, the ones where he ended up healing, feeding or teaching. Did they feel extraordinary to him, or were they just the bread and butter of an itinerant preacher, albeit one who was also the Son of God?

Our own lives can feel humdrum at times, yet they are special because they are the days that God has given us. It is in and of itself an extraordinary thing that we are here at all, that there should be life and that it should have organised itself into the world in which we live. For many of us, the extraordinariness of it is why we believe that there is an organising power; that in the beginning, God created. We may have different ideas about how he created, and how long we are to understand "a day and a night" as being, but to me, it is as difficult to imagine the world randomly appearing and evolving like this as it is to imagine a whirlwind blowing through a scrapyard and producing a Boeing 747.

As I settle in for the night, accompanied by the sound of snoring from the dormitory and supported by my colleague, I am grateful for the coffee he has made me, for the bed that I know my labrador has stolen for the night, and for the knowledge that when I have finished this shift, I shall go home to a good job, a loving family and a full freezer. May none of us take these things for granted.

God bless, Vicci