

Road to emmaus

The strangest thing happened to me a couple months ago. You are probably all aware that I have needed to become more involved in Tilford as we don't have a Resident Priest there at the moment. It's a beautiful church: building and people alike, but it stretches me beyond my bandwidth. Tilford has an excellent volunteer children's minister. I decided to meet her to explore whether she had capacity to work across the benefice. Her name is Becca Makemson and she is truly wonderful. I met her at last year's festival of hope, and in church at Tilford a couple times and then I went to hers for coffee. We started by chatting about our families. She asked, How is your son, Adam? And said, I haven't seen him in ages.? And I'm thinking, my son Adam? How have you met him? And she looked at me dead straight in the eyes. You don't recognise me do you? We have been on retreat together, two years in a row, we spoke deeply. Oh my days! This was 10 years ago, but I saw her then and all the memories came flooding back. I saw her, I truly saw her and I couldn't unsee her and everything was different.

One of the wonders and struggles of scripture are the detail in passages that I don't understand. They are like hooks.

Sometimes they snare us and fling us into doubt, but there is

this relationship with doubt and imagination and reflection. This piece of scripture has always been such a hook for me. How could they have not known it was Jesus. How could they?

Perhaps it was like my experience with Becca, they weren't expecting to see him.

Could it have been like this? *Put the mask on.* Was he hiding? Or were they? so preoccupied with their own sorrow, their own failure and disappointment that they couldn't see him. *Take off mask*

When we are distracted By task, by over-busyness, earthly pursuits, self involvement, we somehow look through Jesus, we don't notice him. It can be a way of hiding - a way of hiding that we aren't even consciously aware of so ingrained is this in our culture. And when we are living this way, without noticing Jesus, our capacity for love diminishes. I was so preoccupied with my role as Vicar of Tilford without a resident priest in post, I wasn't seeing Becca, just what she was doing. Gosh!

I have to slow down, so many of us need to slow down.

If we are operating at God's speed, I imagine this as the speed of walking, we can see Jesus, in every situation, he is always there in the face of the other

Do you know the story of St Martin? - he saw Jesus

I lived half of my adult life without reference to God, to Christ. Half of my adult life.. and then I opened in a difficult time and saw Jesus through scripture through people through experience. My heart burned within me, perhaps you have had that physical sensation of epiphany or understanding, like a quickening or an excitement when something of God resonates and makes sense in your life. And while Jesus had been alongside me all of my life, I could see him And now I cannot unsee him

Those who are experiencing and allow themselves to experience deep loss or deep confusion like the two on the road are often most able to see Jesus because confusion and loss

slow us down, snap us awake, and stop us from hiding. it is then we fully understand what is really important, the singular necessity and priority of love and our hearts burn within us.

They saw him in the breaking of the bread and they ran back to Jerusalem, to the source

Let's slow down this morning and give Jesus space allowing ourselves to dwell in the wide vista he offers, maybe use some of the techniques for stillness from our lent course or from your own practice as we worship, that we too may see Jesus in the breaking of the bread and be caught up in the passion of Christ such that love overflows on those around us.

Mask on What if we could all stop hiding, *mask off* I wonder where we will see Jesus today, tomorrow and this week