

Start where you are

Nothing seems to have caused more upset over recent months than the meeting in the Oval Office between the President of the United States (and his entourage) and the President of Ukraine. Personally, I found it very painful to watch, but what can I do? Perhaps we are too often left in total frustration or helpless anger as world-shaping news seeps into the security of our living rooms. Here's the good news: Just because you can't change everything doesn't mean you can't change anything.

When I was a curate in Bristol Diocese, the former Archbishop of York, Stuart Blanch, visited the curates and asked how many of us were working in large parishes. Many of us dutifully raised our hands. He said, "Just because you can't visit everybody doesn't mean that you can't visit anybody." That principle is true in a number of areas of life. Just because you cannot bring peace to the Middle East or to Ukraine, does not mean that you cannot work for peace in your family, or amongst your work colleagues, or in your community, or even in your church. Start where you are.

When Jesus left his disciples, he told them to begin changing the world where they were (in Jerusalem) and then move on from there, to the ends

of the earth. That's great advice. Start where you are. In the 6th Century BC, the Chinese philosopher, Lao Tzu, said, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." Take that single step. However helpless we feel when watching the news and however appalled we are at the conduct of leaders, we can start to make a difference where we are.

Jesus said, "If you give even a cup of cold water to one of the least of my followers, you will surely be rewarded." Most of us can manage a cup of cold water. Start where you are and, in this year of prayer, surround your action in prayer. Like the young boy at the 'Feeding of the Five Thousand', put your offering into Jesus's hands and watch him do extraordinary things.



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