

Thought for the week

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B,

4th February 2018

Sometimes I feel as if I know how St Paul feels in his epistle this week. I can feel almost overwhelmed by the pressing demands of the crowd around my door, all wanting things from me so that I start to resent something I should be happy about – that I am part of a busy community and that others think I have something to offer.

So the gospel reading this week is just what I need to hear as I prepare for Lent. And, as usual, Jesus shows rather than tells us the way to grow close to his Father and to do what is best for us. In the morning, long before dawn, he gets up and leaves the house. He goes to a lonely place to pray. So lonely it takes a while for his apostles to find him there. I'm not sure that I will manage to get up long before dawn but one thing is certain – I must find a time to be quiet and pray.

When I was lucky enough to live in Morocco, one of the things I loved was the muezzin's call to prayer 5 times a day, and when we lived outside Paris, I would hear the local church pealing the Angelus at midday. Both reminded me how important prayer is – a need to leave our lives for a moment to be with God. Then we can find a way to pause Job's weaver's shuttle noisily crossing and re-crossing the loom.

I hope this Lent, I can find a way to let myself be pulled back to a place where I can be quiet and remember that there should be a space for God at the centre of my life, so that then I am ready to face the crowd at the door.

A Parishioner