

### Waiting for the Ambush – Week beginning 24th February 2014

Everything about us reaches out to be loved and to love, to become the other. We long for intimacy. We are born for it. We are drawn and driven by this original and persistent desire of our being.

Astonishingly we are already encompassed by this ultimate and unique embrace – but we will not, dare not or cannot believe it. We risk staying stuck too long in the trappings of religion. Beyond our familiar ‘to do’ lists for Lent – the things to give up, the tasks to take on, the prayers to squeeze in, the sins to cut out – there is a deeper horizon drawing us closer into a beautiful mystery.

The pursuit of this union with God is not hampered by our imperfections and peccadilloes. The surrender to divine love is only blocked by our own futile efforts to improve, to get better, to save our souls. Beyond such mortal strivings there is a matchless immensity around the way God lures and allures our hearts with a divine determination.

When this holy ambush happens, even partially, no one is measuring merit, progress or failure any more. It is ‘grace upon grace’. Astonished, we find ourselves sinking into the love that is now becoming the power and the presence, the very breath of our lives. . . . ‘Lord only let me make my life simple and straight,’ wrote Rabindranath Tagore, ‘like a flute of reeds for Thee to fill with music.’ The melody is pure and beautiful, new yet familiar, and it calls to us like a far wave. Our stalled heart remembers, surrenders and recognises again the melody of the Maestro. It is the music from which we come; it is the music towards which we go. We need daily silence to catch those grace notes in the cacophony of our daily distractedness.

Falling in love with God is like this for everyone. Human hearts are fashioned for this to happen. Nor does it mean loving the world less, and the people in it. It means we love them more. Wherever we love sensitively, passionately and faithfully, we are already in love with God. Entwined with the heart of God, our love now has no fear to it. Utterly safe, we begin to play, to thank, to bless, to live, to adore as never before.

(Unmasking God pp14.15)