

An Awareness Walk

He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible ... all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

– Colossians 1:15-17

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.

It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;

It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil crushed.

– GM Hopkins "God's Grandeur"

Set off alone. Find your own space and breathe deeply. Be aware of your own body.

Start walking. Feel your limbs and the ground under your feet ... pavement, tarmac, shingle, grass, steps, sand, gravel.

Smell the air. What can you smell ... car exhaust fumes, earth, food, flowers, perfume.

Look at the sky ... the many shades of blue, grey, pink ... the clouds, their movement, colour and shape.

Listen to all the sounds around you, near and distant ... traffic, voices, birds, wind, planes, machinery, music. You may like to make a list.

Touch things as you walk along. Feel the textures of wood, stone, brick, concrete, metal, fabric, soil, vegetation.

Look at things near and far ... shapes, colours, textures.

Be aware of the people you pass (without staring too hard!) ... their faces, eyes, skin, hair, their dress. How are they walking? What are they carrying?

*For Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the features of men's faces.
– GM Hopkins “As Kingfishers Catch Fire”*

Be aware of litter, gutters, cracks, dark corners, signs of death and decay. Perhaps you may find something unexpected there.

Look at the buildings – you may like to choose one in particular. Their shape on the skyline, roofs, chimney pots. Shapes of doors and windows. Ornamentation. Colour of walls. Any graffiti?

Look closely at the patterns and colour of one brick/stone. Feel the texture. Where may it have been made or quarried? Is the building casting shadows about it? What is the building used for? Perhaps its use has changed through time?

Find a tree, bush or plant to look at.

Look at its overall shape, its silhouette against the sky, the way the branches fall. Go up close and feel the bark or stem, look at the patterns and colour.

Look at a leaf, its shape, colour and texture.

Perhaps you may like to pick up a small object from the ground ... a stone, seed pod, coin, piece of gravel, metal or plastic.

Look at its shape and colour. Feel its texture. What may its journey have been to the place where you picked it up?

He showed me a little thing, the size of a hazelnut, in the palm of my hand, and it was as round as a ball. I looked at it with my mind's eye and I thought, 'What can this be?' And answer came, 'It is all that is made'. I marvelled that it could last, for I thought it might have crumbled to nothing, it was so small. And the answer came into my mind, 'It lasts and ever shall because God loves it'. And all things have being through the love of God. In this little thing I saw three truths. The first is that God made it. The second is that God loves it. The third is that God looks after it.

– Julian of Norwich “Revelations of Divine Love”

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below.
Praise God above ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Amen.*