

26th April 2020

Boredom

**“Society is now one polished horde,
Formed of two mighty tribes, the *Bores* and the *Bored*.”**

Lord Byron, Don Juan

When I was little, I got bored easily in church. The sermons and prayers were long, the singing was “dirge-like”, the pews were hard, and the whole thing was too serious a business by far.

What do you do in a dull church when you’re bored? You can’t “fidget”! And you’re not allowed to *talk*, are you? Heaven forbid you would distract God from the seriousness of the worship. So I took to counting the different colours in the stained-glass window.

I wasn’t too bothered about the pictures or the symbolism. I was just fascinated by the myriad of colours and the patterns. Seventy-two red pieces ... Thirty-five yellow ... Fifty-six blue ... Oh, bother! Interrupted by having to stand up to sing – and to stand *still*. Oh, well ... Start again. Twelve yellow on that side ... Fifteen green over there ... Well, you have to do *something* when you’re bored in church.

Boredom is something we’re all familiar with, and not just during sermons either or when you’re a small child in church. I’ve been bored in meetings; in a theatre; watching TV; with a book; at a party; on a wet Sunday afternoon; *and* with this enforced isolation.

So, what to do? No coloured glass in a stained-glass window to count; so maybe I’ll count all the people I love instead. No yellows and greens and blues to tally; so maybe I’ll think of all the colourful places I’ve been to. No images of Jesus, or disciples, or heaven to ponder; so maybe I’ll create more pictures of important things in my life and loves.

And God? Well, he’ll just have to accept this as my worship. After all, counting so many good things is *my* serious business, and this little child of God still has a lot of adding up to do ...

A prayer for today

Loving God, “Count your blessings”, I’m told.

Well, I’m sorry. I can’t!

The truth is, I’ve tried – but there are just too many to count. Amen.

An original reflection by © Tom Gordon

Also available at <https://swallowsnestnet.wordpress.com>