

9th May 2020

Gone?

“Both of them speak of something that is gone:

The pansy at my feet

Doth the same tale repeat:

Whither is fled the visionary gleam?

Where is it now, the glory and the dream?”

William Wordsworth, Imitations of Immortality

A few years ago my wife and I spent a week in Oregon with our good friends, Susan and Michael, in a village right on the Pacific Coast. Their house had an amazing view. We could look down over a rocky cove, with a beautiful beach of yellow sand. Out in the bay there was an island, with flocks of pelicans coming and going. There were Dorey Boats on the Pacific; wonderful breakers on the shore; and, with binoculars, you could see a school of whales out to sea. And there were glorious sunsets, out to the West, over the Pacific Ocean, the island, the rocky cove, the beautiful beach ... It was simply idyllic, and for three nights we marvelled, we photographed, we talked, we drank wine, and we gave thanks to God.

Then, one morning when we came down for breakfast, it had all disappeared. A mist had rolled in from the Pacific, and there was no cove, no beach, no island, no pelicans, no whales ... Gone! I was staring out at nothingness, and bemoaning the obscuring of all that we had grown to love, when Michael came to join us. There was no panic, no sadness for him. He'd seen this before, and he became our prophet of hope. "Don't worry," he said, reassuringly. "It's still there. And even though you can't see it for now, it's not gone away. Don't worry. It'll be back soon." And so it was. Later that morning when the mist had moved away, it was back again, in all its glory and wonder, for us to enjoy.

That, for me, and I hope for all of us in this time of uncertainty, was the message of truth and hope. Gone? Not at all! Don't worry. It's still there. You'll see it again soon. It's the hope and reassurance we all need.

A prayer for today

*Loving God, when the mist hides the joy and pleasures of life,
remind me your love is still there, just waiting for the mist to blow away. Amen.*

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