

19<sup>th</sup> February 2021

## Draughts

**“Charity, dear Miss Prism, Charity!**

**None of us are perfect.**

**I myself am peculiarly susceptible to draughts!”**

*Oscar Wilde, The Importance of Being Earnest*

My very skilful wife has made a draught-excluder for our hall door. Our outside “storm door” stays open most of the day. I suppose we could close it over, but we like to make our home look welcoming. But, with the outside door open, there can be a fair breeze that penetrates the house via our hall door. So a draught-excluder does the trick. I’m not more “peculiarly susceptible to draughts” than anyone else, but, from time to time, I do become aware of a cold draught of air coming from somewhere – an open window on a bus, the back door pushed open by our dog, an ill-fitting window in the church, a broken shutter in a holiday cottage. Draughts penetrate our warmth and disturb our comfort.

In the Season of Lent, our time of reflection before Easter, we’re called on to examine ourselves, be penitent and contrite, and get ourselves ready for the wonder of the Easter message. As we do so, we might feel a cold blast of air disturbing the peaceful warmth of our comfortable lives.

Robert Burns wrote this in the 18<sup>th</sup> century:

*Oh wert thou in the cauld blast, on yonder lea, on yonder lea;  
My plaidie to the angry airt, I’d shelter thee, I’d shelter thee:  
Or did Misfortune’s bitter storms around thee blaw, around thee blaw,  
Thy bield should be my bosom, to share it a’, to share it a’.*

cauld = cold; plaidie = blanket; airt = a point of the compass; blaw = blow; bield = refuge

We’ll all feel a “cauld blast” from time to time. So what “plaidie” can we pull about us to keep ourselves warm? What draught-excluder might we need to stop the intrusion of the cold air that disturbs us. Or – and here’s our Lenten challenge – might we need to spend time finding somewhere that takes us out of the bitter wind altogether, or maybe even fixing what’s broken, so the draught doesn’t get near us in the first place?

### **A prayer for today**

*Brrrrr! Where’s that draught coming from?*

*I’ll have to do something about it if I hope to keep warm. Amen.*

*An original reflection by © Tom Gordon*

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