

26th June 2021

Matter

**“This particularly rapid, unintelligible patter
Isn’t generally heard, and if it is it doesn’t matter.”**

W S Gilbert, Ruddigore

I came across a post on *Facebook* recently which I *had* to reflect on. I don’t know who wrote it because it wasn’t attributed. But I hope whoever penned these words is happy for them being shared further:

The 5 by 5 Rule

*If it’s not gonna matter in five years time,
don’t spend more than five minutes worrying about it.*

I spent two days recently at a conference for hospice chaplains, organised by the Association of Hospice and Palliative Care Chaplains (AHPCC) as part of their support for chaplains throughout the UK. It was on-line, of course, for this is the second year the AHPCC hasn’t been able to get folk together physically. A word which came up regularly in the presentations and chatrooms was “recalibration”, a concept I’ve explored already in a “Thought for the Day”. Other similar words and phrases were used too: reframing; new normality; rebooting; readjustment; finding a different balance; reassessment. But the idea was the same. It was about a redefinition of what mattered. I hope that, as we begin to come out of our Covid restrictions, we all do what these chaplains are having to do – have a long, hard look at what *really* matters, what requires our energy and commitment, and what needs to be left to one side.

One of the speakers at the conference shared two contrasting photographs, taken on the same day, as he went to work in his hospice. The one was of a queue outside *Primark* – “Desperate to get their new pyjamas”, he suggested. And the other of a Muslim chaplain, bedecked in PPE, breaking her heart having just come away from the bedside of yet another dying patient. It’s not that *Primark* PJs don’t matter, it’s just that, in the great scheme of things, there are other things that matter more.

If it’s not going to matter in five years’ time, let’s not give it more than five minutes worry. And if it is ... let it matter as much as it deserves.

A prayer for today

Lord, help me to reassess what matters, and to give that my all. Amen.

An original reflection by © Tom Gordon

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