

Reflection 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021

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### "The One"



One of my more eccentric activities during lockdown has been painting flowers on my walls. It started when I wanted to mark in some permanent way the number of days from the start of the first lockdown until what I imagined then would be the end, when all would be restored to normal and Covid-19 forgotten. But as we all know, it has all just gone on ... and on. And so have my flowers which now can be found in almost every room of the house. I don't count them these days, but sometimes I reflect on them to see what God is saying to me through them. This picture shows a small section of a frieze which goes all round the base of my lounge wall.

As I meditated on it last week, I noticed a space where the dark purple tulip is now. So, I painted the flower you now see to fill in that space. It is the only one in a whole room of pink and mauve and red and yellow tulips.

A few random thoughts which came to me as I reflected on the one purple tulip:

Our Father God always cares for "The One". He is the Good Shepherd who leaves the 99 sheep to find the 1 which is lost (Luke 15: 4-7). We can never be totally lost because God goes on searching for us to bring us deeper into relationship with him.

*Thank you, Lord that we can never be separated from you, however tough life may get.*

We are each beautifully unique - different from everyone else around us. At times, this fact may alarm us as we try to fit in with everyone else. At times we may feel that we stick out: we are not as intelligent or as thin or as athletic as those we live and work amongst. We don't need to try to fit in. God created us to shine wherever he places us. In Matthew 10:30 we read that none of us ever goes unnoticed by God: "not one of them (a sparrow) will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

*Thank you, Lord, that our identity is in you alone and you care for us as if there was only one of us.*

Every leaf and flower in nature is unique. The beauty to be found in God's world surprises and amazes us. As Spring begins, we can appreciate all the different sights and sounds coming to life once more. They uplift our souls and brighten our spirits.

*Thank you, Lord, for the wonders of creation which you have made for us to enjoy.*

Many people are suffering the effects of isolation at the present time whether that is as a result of shielding and the restrictions of Covid-19 or because of serious illness or disability. Many persecuted Christians are in solitary confinement. Many people are alone in this world without family or friends. Many are homeless and afraid because they have to survive alone. Some people are single but not by choice. They travel our world without the closeness of a life partner.

*We pray, Lord, for all those who will be alone today. Help them to know that you always walk with them.*

As Christians we all need time alone with God to examine our lives and kickstart our faith journeys again. We need time when we have important decisions to make or we need to wait on God for some clarification of the direction of travel. This time alone may be a normal daily quiet time or a longer Quiet Day or a Retreat.

*We thank you, Lord, for your presence in our lives, guiding, strengthening and convicting. We ask you to speak to us through the "alone" moments of this day.*