

ONE DAY LAST SUMMER I was standing at the door of a friend's house, ringing the doorbell. It took some time to be answered and while I was waiting I noticed the bush behind me was now producing small berries and there was a bee hovering above it, moving at high speed as if not yet certain what spot to land on. As my eyes got used to concentrating on one area, I realized there were a couple of other bees already on the bush, and then, wow, as I looked deeper into the plant, I was seeing bees at every point – 30 at least. It was a moment of continual discovery.

It occurred to me that if the door had been answered more quickly, I might only have been aware of the solitary bee, but not seen any deeper.

We live a lot of our life concentrating on our inner thoughts. We can drive from Tinto to the supermarket in Lanark and park, and suddenly realise we were so caught up in thought we don't actually remember the journey. And a lot of the time we spend concentrating on our busy activities – like ensuring we get all the things on our shopping list, and we don't notice, until we come to the queue for the till, that our next door neighbour was also in the shop - and right behind us!

Part of the life spiritual has to be about finding times, spaces just to be, just to notice. And to notice what lies underneath.

In the Palestinian village of Jayyous where the main agricultural fields were trapped (illegally, under international law) on the other side of the Separation Wall, it was impossible for any but the older farmers to access their fertile land. Younger farmers were often unemployed or had to seek other employment. But higher up, where the village was built, there was extensive land where olives and thyme grew, and other areas which belonged to no one. A small community group began to explore the idea of becoming more commercially involved in honey production, and one of the group wanted to call the honey "Two million flowers" – because he understood that bees would have to visit that number of flowers, just to create 1lb of honey. The jar of honey sitting in our kitchens represents such an amazing quantity of work. I didn't quite believe that fact, so I



Googled it and was told it was true, and that it would account for 55,000 miles of travel by bees – also for 1lb of honey – yet a worker bee in its whole life might only produce 1/12th of a teaspoon of honey. Also they might only live 25 days in the summer, and so, to cover my big slice of toast probably took the working life of 25 bees.

And one other final fact that I learnt. To make that buzzing sound, the honey bee beats its wings almost 12,000 times a minute - about 200 times a minute.

Now, I feel an immense sense of gratitude for the work of the bees, and I do hope, on my many foraging trips to the kitchen, that I never lose gratitude to the only insect that produces food for human consumption.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

Lord we see you carefully prepared
and responding on the hoof.

Lord we see you planning ahead
and reacting in the moment.

Lord we see you showing the way
and equipping and empowering others.

Lord we see you right in the thick of it
and in deserted places.

For you took time to be with the crowds
and to be with God.

You took time to encounter individuals
and to encounter yourself.

You took time to sift and sort
to discern and pray.

You took time to do and to be.

What if, today we followed your example..

Knowing ourselves beloved of God.

Doing, with others, the work you reveal.

Resting in you that we might be filled.

Being, simply, who you call us to be.

For such a time as this.

Rev. Liz Crumlish 2020

Tinto Parishes REFLECTION phone line.

The line is available to call at any time, and a new reflection is added on Friday every week.



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A reflection from Rev. George for those who cannot access the internet or take part in the Sunday worship. Or for just anyone!