

Today's thought for the day begins with part of a poem by Dietrich Bonhoeffer (in his Letters and Papers from prison). It is called "Who am I?" and was read out during one of the Easter services on TV.

"Who am I? This or the other?

Am I one person today and tomorrow another?

Am I both at once? A hypocrite before others,
and before myself a contemptibly woebegone weakling?

Or is something within me still like a beaten army,
fleeing in disorder from victory already achieved?

BUT THEN he finishes on this uplifting note!

Who am I? They mock me these lonely questions of mine.

Whoever I am, Thou knowest O God, I AM THINE.

This question Who am I ? is a really difficult one. Now we have lockdown - in our homes, gardens, on walks or just sitting, perhaps we can contemplate this - who am I really?

In one of his books, Anthony de Mello had the Master pose the question to his followers: "What, in your opinion, is the most important of all religious questions?" He got many answers - "Does God exist", "Is there life after death?" and many more.

"NO" said the Master "the most important question is Who am I?"

In another of de Mello's books, the Master asked a woman "who are you?" She said her name, that she was a wife, a mother, a teacher etc and after each reply the Master said "I didn't ask your name, your role, your job - I asked "Who are you?"(I've abbreviated considerably!)

The problem? often is that we are a variety of different people. We are one person to our partner, another person to our family, another to our friends, another to workmates and so on. Aldous Huxley called these "non-selves".

We can often be like chameleons - changing to suit our audience. The book I read as my Lent book would have us look at our attitude to others, our prejudices, our intolerances, what or who irritates us (I should say "my" not "our"!))

If this sounds a bit depressing or navel-gazing, it need not be - because when we strip away all the selves of the self, we arrive at the real me- as Tillich described it - "the ground of our being". And there, in the ground of our being, dwells God, the God who dwells in all of us (a sobering thought!)

When God said to Jesus at His baptism "This is my Beloved" he was talking to us - we are all His beloved. He loves us warts and all and we are His. "Christ lives in me ... the Son of God loved me and gave himself for me"(Galatians 2:20).

I hope this is not too psychological, but it has a couple of authors you might like to check out. We put a rainbow in the window -a symbol of hope for the future.

A prayer of St Teresa :

"Behold Lord, we are Your handiwork.

May your goodness and mercy help us" –

help us and our families through this very difficult time,
and help us to discover our real selves

"We are a temple of the Holy Spirit wherein God dwells".

God bless all of you and your families and friends.