

WEEKLY SERMON

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Find a quiet place and get some rest

I thought about these lines in Psalms earlier this week (23 v1-2) while exploring the town and countryside around Grasmere in the Lake District National Park.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters."

After an exceptionally busy period at work, including communications around the Consecration of our new Bishop, Rt Rev. Dr Joe Kennedy, we had a lovely family trip to the Lakes. My wife and I travelled there with our daughter who was visiting for us a few days.

It was a glorious day in and around Grasmere ... and I'm not just talking about the weather, although it was great (not always guaranteed in this unpredictable summer)!

I believe it's really important to build regular breaks into your working life - even just a single day - to ensure you pace yourself. It makes a huge difference.

I find I've been doing that more and more in recent years. It's good for your mental as well as physical health; especially as you get (just that little bit) older!

While walking, I reflected on how various politicians made complete fools of themselves during the recent General Election campaign, trying to score political points after Sir Keir Starmer said he would still spend quality time with his family if he was Prime Minister after July 4.

One Conservative regretted it in real time ... boasting about how they worked seven days a week during a TV interview before being taken apart by the interviewer for setting unrealistic goals for themselves.

No one can sustain working seven days out of seven and politicians should be setting an example; not exemplifying the kind of behaviour that will only lead to burnout.

We are not made to work 24/7 - despite living in a society that now operates 24/7 of course. It's just not possible and Jesus knows this.

Jesus encouraged his own disciples to rest, as we read in Mark's Gospel (v 30-31) where it says: *"The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, 'Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest'."*

HEALTHY CHURCHES TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

So don't try to keep going if you have been busy recently; the work will wait and be better for it when you return - even after just one day off like I had this week.

Find your own space to breathe - it might be in Grasmere or in your back garden - but make sure it happens. You won't regret it.

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