

## **To Community Members – 12-4-2010**

Now I am home, thank you for your prayers, cards, phone calls, e-mails, good wishes and visits. In the fear and anxiety, I have experienced a drumbeat of thankfulness for all I have found in life, and have felt surrounded by peoples' love. We really are a community. In very part exchange here are 3 poems and an Easter reflection. This illness has released lots of words in me to add to the normal Leader's ones. They are reports from another place.

For love found

David

### **From David to Robert**

When I walked into A&E - (I almost cycled. Are there bicycle ambulances? Is there an entrepreneurial opportunity here?) - I moved from the world of David to the world of Robert.

Robert is my hospital name.

Like the world of David, the world of Robert has its routines.

The world of David: Guardian, New Yorker, books, lying on the sofa reading, Mathilde writing letters or making cards, lying in bed arms around her, decades feeling her body; e-mails, writing documents, talking to Anne (what is that word?), meetings – now that is David; the Saturday phone call with Naomi, talking politics with Thomas, coffee on Sunday chez Agnew.

The world of Robert: intrusion (but with kindness), checking temperature and blood pressure, machines beeping, trolleys, being wheeled, my body being felt, questions, tests, the curtain going round, being told, shock, numbness, fear.

Question to hospital administration: can I give Robert back to you and have David in return?

### **Modus Vivendi**

I live with it precariously, the beast in the room, intimate with me, wishing to embrace, to smother me.

I have known you for years and I have hidden from you.

There are other intimacies, other embraces that I have known.

Now my uncertain hand is held, caressed like old times, co-ordinated by love.

### **Night Thoughts in Hospital, Easter Week**

The howl of a woman on a trolley, I am there too.  
The touch of a doctor's hand, Jesus is there too.  
The deep drumbeat of thankfulness, for people's love is here too.  
A wife's gentleness holds me.  
Surrounded, drowning, held, lost, conflicting thoughts are here too.  
The night goes on, and dawn refuses its presence.  
A nurse looks in, I am still here, but precarious to my self.

### **Thoughts on Easter Sunday**

I have experienced being surrounded by love over the last week. This is not something I expected or felt I deserved, indeed definitely not. This love was simply, gratuitously given to me, and a capacity to say thanks.

I have been with a woman on a trolley all week – the woman who suddenly howled with anguish beside me in A&E, both of us not in control. As I read the Passion Story during the week, she was beside me, indeed I was her. 'Jesus, remember me, remember her when you come into your kingdom.'

Now on Easter Sunday I see the resurrection mystery as simply (!) God's love for us, surrounding us, holding us. It is not deserved, instead it is freely given.

Authentic love is not sentimental. It deals with our imperfect human reality, our failure, our desperate desire to be the centre of attention (the particular temptation of the ill).

Love – divine, human – de-centres us, transfigures our reality; it does not dissolve disagreeable facts, but puts the facts in their proper place.

David