

Feast of St John 27/12/25

One of the joys of wandering through the seemingly same landscape, day after day, is that it's never the same, day after day, and nor am I. We are always in the process of discovery. It might be the hearing of a Great Tit in song, which we might be read as heralding Spring or a male Chinese Water Deer in close pursuit of a female (likewise), or a shift in the wind heralding winter, at one and the same time. Or the finding of an empty tomb which had a body in it three days ago. Everything is flux and today's reading is full of movement. There is tension here between the Beloved Disciple and Peter over the meaning of what they find, a necessary tension perhaps which we find in all understanding; each of us coming to truth differently. We try to capture this truth in dogmatic statements but what the dogma can't do is contain the understanding which each of us has, and is; an understanding and a personality always on the move, always changing. What you are hearing of course is the famous statement, or series of statements, by the Socratic philosopher Heraclitus:

*'Upon those that step into the same rivers different and different waters flow',*

and not only in the sense that the river changes but that we change too, no one can step into the same river twice, because who we are has also changed. So all is in flux, and all is connected or to quote Adam Nicolson in his compelling exploration of rock pools: 'The Sea is Not Made of Water':

*'There is something that unites everything, which he [Heraclitus] called the logos, the principle of order and knowledge. That 'measure' is present in all change. It is the hidden stability that runs behind and through change. The governing principle of the logos is that opposites unite. The path up and down is one and the same.'*

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The writer of the first letter of St John translates 'logos' as the Word who is life - the life that is made visible in Christ - an underlying order which makes sense of everything. It's a powerful claim and each of us will have to keep revisiting this seemingly same 'landscape' in order to allow it to change us - it's at work in us always: an invitation to enter the eternal life of Father, Son and Spirit. It's why we celebrate St John - the first 'to believe'.

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