

Another Day

Biblical reflections for busy teachers



The 'Who?' Question

"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed, 'Everyone is looking for you!'" Mark 1:35-37

The Greek adverb euthus ('immediately'/'at once'/'straightway') occurs about forty times in the sixteen relatively short chapters of Mark's Gospel. In this way and others, his fast-moving narrative presents us with a picture of Jesus as a person of action. This cameraman of the gospel writers takes us swiftly from scene to scene where Jesus is shown teaching or performing miracles, but here in these verses he also records how Jesus prayed in a solitary place early in the morning. Were not such times the wellspring of his action?

Our times on our own away from the action of the classroom are often filled with marking and preparation. We know from experience that there is a strong correlation between the time and effort spent in preparation of the material for the lesson and how clearly and effectively it comes across to our pupils.

However, in focussing exclusively on preparation of lesson material, we may neglect another aspect of preparation, that of the person who is to teach it. We may be so taken up with the 'what?' and 'how?' of our teaching that we lose sight of the 'who?' Who is teaching and, indeed, who is learning in the context of those personal relationships that are so central to life in the classroom. We need to prepare our *selves* as well as the subject-matter and the approaches and techniques that we will use in our teaching.

Solitary places may be hard to find but perhaps the journey from home to school, whether on foot or by bike, bus, train or car, can provide opportunity this morning or tomorrow morning to make our selves more ready for the day that is to come.

Great Teacher and Man of Action and Prayer, please make me as a person more prepared to meet other people, children, teenagers, colleagues, parents, today and to be a channel of your blessing to them. Amen.