

Perspectives of Paradox

Confused (5th in the series inspired by Northumbria Community Prayer Guide 2024-25*)

****‘...purposefully lost, deliberately uncertain and resolutely confused’ ****

I have a notebook with these words printed on the cover. They are a fact of my life: I am often lost, uncertain and confused in the maze of information that crowds my life, not least with electronic devices, but also in many other situations! Frustration can reach catastrophic heights, bewilderment can plumb depressing lows. Neither response is a remedy for lostness, nor a map to find the way! My notebook reminds me to accept the lostness, uncertainty and confusion and to seek help, or to accept that I am called to be engaged elsewhere! Confusion and uncertainty can be the catalyst for discovery.

****‘May we be intentionally uncertain and confused because we know we can trust God, our unchanging rock, on the journey to finding our true purpose. May God help us to embrace these paradoxes.’ ****

There is much we don't know, much we cannot discern, much we find confusing in our human life. This is normal – it is part of what it means to be human. It is the divine hand of caution integral to our will to survive, explore and discover more. Faith is the hand which guides us through the wilderness. So how can it be that we who have faith also doubt?



Shepherds' Dene Chapel. AEM

It helps to remember that doubt is not the opposite of faith. The opposite of faith is certainty. Faith is the soulmate of doubt and the roadway towards divine certainty.

****‘We need to be candles, burning between faith and doubt, hope and despair, life and death’ (William Brodrick)****

****‘We ask for God’s presence in this discomfort as we contain the doubts and live with them while also growing in faith.’ ****

Nov 2024