

Website Reflections
Monday 29th June 2020
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Revelation

O world invisible, we view thee:
O world intangible, we touch thee:
O world unknowable, we know thee
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee!

These lines are from the poem *In a strange land*, by the Victorian poet, Francis Thompson and they have kept coming into my mind throughout the Coronavirus crisis. That is because they seem to me to describe so aptly what we have experienced in recent weeks. We have encountered what is good in humanity – the kindness and support of others, the devotion to duty of professionals and those who respond to our daily needs. In a strangely prolonged and translucent spring, counterbalancing the dark threat of Coronavirus, we have seen and heard nature as it really is – birdsong, the breeze in the trees, clear air, silence.

This is not the memory everyone will retain of these weeks, so those of us who do must be doubly grateful for what we have discovered.

Francis Thompson spent much of his life homeless on the streets of London. Yet he had a vision of something beyond his immediate misfortunes and needs.

And for us, there was a particular moment when we saw a vision of uplifting beauty and majesty – a vision of what is always there, but which we have managed to hide, almost to obliterate.



I shall not quickly forget that view of the Himalayas, revealed for the first time in many years as they emerged from the clouds of man-made pollution, suspended in the sky, like a beautiful city, which all at once we could see and access, beyond us, but incontrovertibly there, like a new heaven and a new earth.

Perhaps one day humanity will so arrange things that such beauty will be permanently restored to us. Till then, we have the certainty that it is always there.