

In the beginning was the Word...

An Advent & Christmas Course from the Diocese of Aberdeen & Orkney



Hidden

Monday 4th December 2023



*"Hidden Gance" by Andrea Gill (1990, earthenware and slip)
Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of MCI*

Scripture: Matthew 8:5-13

When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, appealing to him and saying, 'Lord, my servant is lying at home paralysed, in terrible distress.' And he said to him, 'I will come and cure him.' The centurion answered, 'Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, "Go", and he goes, and to another, "Come", and he comes, and to my slave, "Do this", and the slave does it.' When Jesus heard him, he was amazed and said to those who followed him, 'Truly I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' And to the centurion Jesus said, 'Go; let it be done for you according to your faith.' And the servant was healed in that hour.

To reflect

What is hidden? Objects hiding or people hiding from view, hidden by objects or lack of light, those things we do not see because there is not sufficient light, the sun dipping beneath the horizon or the lack of moonlight when it's a new moon.

In today's Gospel reading Jesus' healing ministry is not hidden but Jesus makes comment that some will not see who he really is. Sometimes things are hidden because we do not see them, do not look closely enough or because they are obscured from view.

In his poem *O Rex Gentium* the Priest Poet Malcolm Guite writes of a hidden King, the King we wait for and look for this Advent came the first time in unexpected places for an earthly King, not born to a ruling family or with the benefits of a privileged upbringing.

Today you're invited to read the poem and reflect what the phrase 'hidden King' means for you this Advent Season and as you wait for God With Us - Emmanuel.

O Rex Gentium by Malcolm Guite

O King of our desire whom we despise,
King of the nations never on the throne,
Unfound foundation, cast-off cornerstone,
Rejected joiner, making many one,
You have no form or beauty for our eyes,
A King who comes to give away his crown,
A King within our rags of flesh and bone.
We pierce the flesh that pierces our disguise,
For we ourselves are found in you alone.
Come to us now and find in us your throne,
O King within the child within the clay,
O hidden King who shapes us in the play
Of all creation. Shape us for the day
Your coming Kingdom comes into its own.

To listen

Thou hidden love of God, whose height (Gerhard Tersteegen, translated by John Wesley) one version is by The London Fox Singers

<https://open.spotify.com/track/6t0M54Ux8uMfZ5Xvieycl2?si=70dcfdcc3bef4e69>

Hide and Seek by Stormzy (FLO Remix)

<https://open.spotify.com/track/6jAdi1dYM3CqKaPnaGu03H?si=eff368e119e34956>

The word for each day (3-25 December is taken from Advent Word 2023 #adventword).

...and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.