

Good Morning.

The period of Royal Mourning has come to an end 18 days since The Queen died. It's worth recalling that on the 9th day of this 9th month something happened to the News. The previous day the evening headlines carried the death of The Queen and the accession of the King. Then on the Friday they were joined in the news by ordinary people keeping vigil.

The sorrow and joy of ordinary citizens filled every news bulletin for days. With protests acknowledged but set aside, for once in a rare moment of our national life the news was about ordinary people of every age, colour and creed forming friendships in orderly queues, making pilgrimages to palaces from Balmoral to Buckingham, from Westminster to Windsor.

No longer were the headlines dominated by terrorists, murderers and rapists; by crises economic and environmental; by catastrophes and celebrities. They were about ordinary people!

Sometimes the litany of tragedies that make up the News can leave you feeling that the world's gone mad. The focus on the sad and the bad can even make you think that there are no decent people left in the world! I know that sounds like an exaggeration, but of late I've heard so many bemoan the state of things. But since the 9th of September the News has let us know that there are hundreds of thousands, indeed millions, of ordinary citizens who eschew violence, love silence and honour not just the Queen and King but, most importantly, one another.

What they may also have shown is that although many have turned their backs on institutional religion we're still led by a spiritual instinct. It doesn't come to the surface every day but at certain times it drives us to symbols and rituals and changes us into queues of pilgrims.

These spiritual expressions have made the headlines and complemented the formal rituals of established religion. Both are evidence of what the Book of Ecclesiastes claims -namely that God has 'set eternity into the human heart'.

This is what Christians believe was heralded by Jesus who called it 'good news'. But like all good news it doesn't feature as much as the bad. Some might say, 'Just as well', for it would mean that the good was the exception to human life. But, thank God, as this September has shown, it isn't! It signifies what some have called 'the original goodness of Creation'.

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