

# Along the track

## Daily Resurrection

In his book *The Cellist of Sarajevo*, Steven Golloway recounts the story of a man who for twenty-two days, played Adagio in memory of the dead. He played in the same place at the same time each day, in the middle of a war ravaged street where mortars fell and snipers fired unchecked. In the middle of fear and suffering this act of courage raised the spirits of those who lived in this precarious place.

*What could this man possibly accomplish by playing in the street? It would not bring anyone back from the dead, wouldn't feed anyone, wouldn't replace one brick. It was a foolish gesture, a pointless exercise. He stares at the cellist and feels himself relax as the music seeps into him... the cellist's dirty tuxedo becomes clean, shoes polished bright as mirrors. The building behind the cellist repairs itself. The scars of bullets and shrapnel are covered by plaster and paint, windows reassemble, clarify and sparkle as the sun reflects off glass. He watches as the city heals itself around him.*

None of this happens while he plays of course, but this courageous gesture did bring life and warmth back in the midst of the coldness of hatred and destruction. For this brief time people remembered what was and what could be again. They came to experience hope and where there is hope, there is love and where there is love there is forgiveness, then what has been lost and torn apart can be restored.

Forgiveness is a powerful and transformative force. For both parties. It is an integral part of redemption. Jesus often forgave people when he healed them. That was what was needed, rather than physical relief. Jesus forgave His persecutors on the Cross. That was truly extraordinary. He forgave the thief crucified with him. The resurrected Jesus gave the assembled apostles the power to forgive, even though they were disheartened and planning how to get away. The message of the resurrection is not just about being raised from the dead but about how forgiveness brings new life and hope in times of hurt, disappointment, bitterness, anger and even hatred.

Forgiveness takes courage. Sometimes it is very, very hard to forgive. And one party may not be ready to give or receive. The Cellist risked everything, even life to bring this moment of hope to his city. It was a city divided by hatred and racial as well as

religious tension. As the Cellist played, the writer says, *people around him stand up taller, their faces put on weight and colour, clothes gain lost thread, brighten, smooth out their wrinkles. The city heals itself around him.*

If we just consider the resurrection to be an event in the past or even something we hope and pray for in the future, we miss its true significance. It is an everyday event. We are called to give it life every day, in ourselves and in those around us. We too can make people stand taller, we can bring back colour and movement and wonder and peace to the lives of those around us who need it. Whenever we strive to change sadness into happiness, when we do something to try to heal the broken hearted, to bring hope to those who feel bitter and wronged, to those who feel they have been treated unfairly, to those who have been bruised by those who have lied or treated them without dignity or compassion, we bring the resurrection to life. When we work to bring a little more peace through acts of justice (however mundane they may consider them to be) or assist the sick and the weak, we meet the God of the resurrection and introduce that God to others. And so often they are in desperate need of finding the God of comfort and peace.

We all feel inadequate to the task. We have all failed in what we have done and in what we have chosen not to do. We have inflicted hurt on others, knowingly or unknowingly. We have made mistakes and treated others unfairly. The God of the resurrection offers us forgiveness every day, a new start, a new beginning. The resurrection isn't an historical event – it is rather a life giving force that awakens us to redemption every day.

*The cellist stands, picks up his stool and turns away from the street, enters a doorway and is gone. And those who look on know that they will be the ones who rebuild Sarajevo when the time comes. They will put every brick back, replace every window, patch every hole.*

And they did. I saw it.

Regards  
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