

## Thought for the Day – Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021

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### Encounter

I very much enjoyed going to the [West Wittering beach](#) yesterday with Jill. Encountering the sea after a long absence, watching the waves and hearing its sounds, closing my eyes to feel the force of the breeze, its sounds, to feel the warmth of the sunshine sneaking in and out, faced with a force greater and more powerful than my usual day to day experience, had a calming and stilling effect on us. Anxious thoughts were put in its proper perspective and we felt refreshed, joyful. I asked Jill "Why don't we do this more often?"

Prayer is an encounter with a force greater than ourselves, although we would call this force love. Prayer is not just about telling God things, or hearing God speak to us, it is also about an encounter. These encounters can come to us, but more often, we need to 'go to the seaside' as it were. We need to make the space. We can do so in a special place, but I find it helpful to sometimes take 10 mins out, to just be quiet, and to think about being in God's presence. Often, I am interrupted by thoughts, distractions, but in between, there are fleeting seconds when I am truly aware of being in the presence of this love greater than myself. The effect of those seconds of encounter, very is similar to the effect of going to the sea side I find.

Perhaps the prophet had something like this in mind in [Isaiah 40:31](#)

We are seeing very distressing events take place, around the world, especially in Afghanistan and closer at home, at this time. Many of us feel powerless to act, but act we must when we can. But if we are not to get overwhelmed, we must also encounter God in prayer; it is where we find the strength, peace, and fire in our hearts that is needed at times like this.

How can you make space this week to encounter God's loving healing energizing presence?