

AUDIO RETREAT

Advent Retreat 2022 | Week Four | Turning Points

This week we have been thinking about turning points in our lives. Sometimes these come at points when we must choose a way to go forward, sometimes the choice is between forward and back. If you are out walking this week – or even out in the car – think about how you decide which way to go. Do you choose the shortest route? or the quickest? or the most scenic? Do you think about the turnings you make – or are you on automatic pilot?

What about your journey through life? Is that different?

The Road Not Taken, By Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.



National Gallery

In this picture 'The Avenue at Middleharnis' by the seventeenth century Dutch painter Meindert Hobbema the way ahead seems clear and straight, outlined by the trees, but a closer look reveals a path turning off to the right. What is currently ahead of you in your life? How clear is your way forward?

If you would like to zoom in and look more closely you can find this image at

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/meindert-hobbema-the-avenue-at-middelharnis>

Scripture for reflection

Is there a particular story or character in Scripture whose story speaks to you about turning points? You might like to read the following, which are mentioned in the audio: Acts 9: 3-9; Luke 15: 11-24; Ruth 1: 6-18; Jonah (read the whole book – it's not long!); Exodus 3: 1-4

Or choose one of the following verses and consider what it means to you to know God is with you on your way:

Psalm 139: 1-3 and 7-10; Psalm 119:105; Isaiah 30:21; Isaiah 43: 1-2