

Thought for the week: What questions might you ask of me and of us today?

Why?' is often the most frustrating word for parents with young children. Consider when the last time was that you were genuinely curious about why or how something came to be. Often children have this innately, but it is something important for us all because the way to find out more is to ask questions, and lots of them! In our reading from John's Gospel, Nicodemus keeps asking questions, and each answer Jesus offers him leads him to ask more questions. Can you think of examples from your own life when you have kept asking questions about something? What happened?

Many of the people who met Jesus asked him questions, so we should also feel free to ask questions about our faith, either asking Jesus in prayer, or other Christians, or both. As Jesus says in John 3.17 'God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him'. Jesus does not condemn us or judge us when we ask questions; in fact, he probably delights that we want to know more. That means that, as Christian communities, we might ask ourselves whether our communities are safe spaces for people to ask questions. Would people feel comfortable asking questions about faith, without fear of being judged or ostracised? And can we create communities that are comfortable with unanswered questions? Perhaps we don't always feel that we need to have the 'right' answer, or even any answer.

In our Bible passage from John's Gospel, Nicodemus is not the only one who asks questions. Jesus also asks questions of Nicodemus – quite challenging questions. He asks him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?' and 'If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?'. We might be feeling rather glad that we weren't Nicodemus at this point. But it might be helpful to ask ourselves what questions Jesus might ask of us today, both as individuals and as communities?

Especially in this time of Lent, are there things God might be encouraging us to think about more or less? Are there things we might prioritise and reprioritise? Are there people God might be asking us to reach out to?

Spend some time asking Jesus, 'What questions might you ask of me and of us today?'