

# Power of Small Things

*Revd Tom Handy, School Chaplain, February 2023*

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Have you ever had a small baby grip your face in an iron infantile grasp? I wonder if you've ever been in a dark room with a mosquito? I don't know whether you've ever trod on lego with bare feet? Have you experienced having a small amount of sand trapped inside your clothing or on your bedsheets?

Small things are not necessarily weak things, far from it. From ants that can carry forty times their own body weight to the relative strength of a spider's web. Small and sometimes seemingly delicate things can be tough, can be striking, can be more than expected. Strength alongside diminutive size or fragility.

It is the time of year when you may have already noticed snowdrops, the small white flowers, starting to peek up which even amongst the continuing frost, dark mornings and evenings, cold rooms and gloomy days are the very first signs of spring. A few days ago was St. Brigid's day or the ancient Celtic feast of Imbolc which, believe it or not, marks the beginning of spring and with it the first shoots of new life. The snowdrop is one of the symbols used for the day.

Snowdrops, which are dainty but tough. Pure white and fresh but able to withstand the ravages of the season. A perfect illustration of small beginnings which are determined - as the flowers burst their way through the cold, hard ground.

We've heard a reading this morning in which Jesus gave one of his many illustrations about seeds and growth - about the power of small things. I believe that when he was providing people with such pictures he was doing so marvelling at all which is taking place in the often unseen or overlooked elements in the world around. He is asking us to consider that we are also a part of this mysterious, powerful life - a life where things invariably begin tiny and furthermore that these small things are powerful. More powerful than we might ever at first realise.

Jesus didn't say this so far as I know but I came across this reflection on seeds:

"Every seed or bulb you plant contains within itself an enormous amount of information about the Universe. Nothing made by human hands can compare with this information either in size or accuracy. Through the help of these data the seed knows the exact time, down to the millisecond, when it is to come alive, grow - what juices it is to take from the Earth, how to make use of the rays of the celestial bodies - the Sun, Moon and stars, what it is to grow into, what fruit to bring forth."

That's plants but think about our lives, your life. All of those marvellous new beginnings are, or some of them at least, already at work amongst you, in your lives. If you are, for

example, to have lifelong friends, you may have the beginnings of those friendships now or they are just waiting to be discovered. If you have an enduring passion or focus in life, it may well be in its early stages now or just about to be uncovered. Who you are yet to become is likely already at work in your life.

So at this time amongst the very beginnings of spring, the powerful signs of newness whilst still amongst the chill and murkiness, perhaps let us commit ourselves to be thankful for the small things, the possibilities that we see, the fresh areas of our lives. Let us treat them with care not because they are weak but because of the power that they hold. Let us treat them with wonder because of the mystery that they hold. Let us treat them with respect because our future may be entwined with their growth. Let us live our lives with the awe and expectation of what is already work

In a world which is so often dominated by and attracted to results, end products, the biggest and so-called best, let us dare to be captivated by the small but powerful new beginnings that this season speaks of. In the world as in our lives. The growth, the journey, the hope that is around us and within us.