

**A Different Perspective: Poems to make you think and pray.**

*By Fr Mark Skelton, Priest-Poet of Plymouth Diocese.*

**Light and Salt**

*Matthew 5:13-16*

A light may shine into the darkest reach,  
Or lead the lost to find a place of rest.  
Or be a beacon standing in the breach,  
or be the welcome to a nervous guest.  
But it can turn the searcher from the door  
when glare and brightness blinds the one who comes.

The salt brings flavour to the blandest plate,  
enhancing simple food with quiet grace.  
Enabling the good to stretch to great  
and yet unnoticed in its background place.  
But if it's absent or is overused  
the table's turned, the meal may be refused.

Sometimes we're called to shine for all to see,  
the shadow's end, the darkness brought to light.  
But sometimes we must be the salt for earth,  
unnoticed, in the background, out of sight.  
Both ways speak of discipleship so then  
He uses each when needed for His plan.



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**Rock or Sand**

*Matthew 7:24-27; Luke 6:46-49*

A child exploring rock pool's depths,  
a bucket in his hand,  
may pause and turn again to see  
his castles made of sand.

He'll dig a moat around his fort,  
to staunch the incoming tide;  
But no. His moulded dream will fall,  
encroached from every side.

Re-build with pebbles, shells on rock  
and raise the frame again.  
And waves can crash and winds may blow,  
this sculpture will remain.

Each wall collapses if it stands  
upon itself alone.  
But build it safe and know it true;  
founded on rock and stone.



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**Speck or Plank**

*Luke 6:41-42*

A speck can irritate and mar an eye,  
and mist the way we look out on the world.  
And yet, one tear, when wept with sorrow's power,  
will wash and cleanse the vision once again.

But planks, which jut aggressive from the eye,  
and hit and bruise those who stand near its reach,  
can only be removed by painful plan.  
Pulled from the eye which fails to see its fault.

But look, this plank once seen for what it is,  
and lain in humble sorrow on the ground,  
can form a bridge and make a path to end  
the isolation of two island souls.



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**The Squandering**

*Luke 15:8-10*

The woman scours her home to find the loss,  
this fallen penny rolled far from her hand.  
Her stretching for one, small unnoticed coin  
seems far more effort than the need demands.

Yet does it represent more than it is?  
The glinting echo of her dowry-ed day?  
Or payment for some service she'd received?  
Or savings hoarded for that rainy day?

Yet look. She finds the coin and shares the joy.  
'Come sing with me and let's not count the cost!'  
Inviting all her friends to gather round  
and feast on food paid with the coin she'd lost.

Why waste what you have longed for on a whim,  
Feeding your neighbours, drawing them to be?  
This is THE kingdom which does not make sense  
but joyously exults in wasteful welcome.





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**The Different Ways to Start a Fire**

*John 20:22; Acts 2*

These tongues of flame which fire the room,  
the wind which rocks its very base.  
Their voices raised in babbled hope  
to crash out to a world which waits.

A gentle sigh of mission given;  
a wounded hand stretched out to show  
that acts of love and service lived  
will lead the frightened hearts to grow.

Two ways by which a world's inspired.  
Two views of how they're called to live.  
The same inspirer draws them on  
Proclaim, Enable, Heal, Forgive.

