

## What's Our *Real* Home?

### Going Home

A friend of mine – let's call him Mike – has an elderly mother. Mike's mother is very old, long-widowed, and lives alone. She is fortunate, however, in that (though very confused, and affected by all the symptoms of senile dementia) she is able to live in her own house, not a care-home or hospital – depending, of course, on a large amount of regular assistance from Mike. Every week, he takes her shopping, and perhaps visiting relatives, but always returns her home at the end of the day. However, time and time again, she says to him “I *wish* I could go home!” – “But you *are* home”, Mike says, despairingly, “where d’you think you are?”

Mike presumes it's just her confusion; that's the way the elderly are. Actually, I think there's more to it. Soon, she knows, it will be time *really* to go home; and she's ready and willing; not long, now. Perhaps those least affected with the busy-ness of the world have more inner knowledge, a deeper perception of reality that goes beyond ordinary, material things. Maybe this is the case at both ends of life; it is often said that children have an extra, special, perception of things beyond the ordinary, something they lose a little of with every day that passes.

Perhaps it is just those of us caught up in the maelstrom of middle life, and all its stresses, that are furthest from seeing the beyond; and the very young, and the very old, are people for whom the veil of the material world is thinner, who experience tantalising intimations, from things in the present, of that which is beyond it. So often our language and ideas about ordinary life betray – as C. S. Lewis argued – some not-quite-realised perception of the infinite, or rather the truth that reality and infinity – as we one day will know it – is not, was perhaps never meant to be, as we now experience it. Reality, eternity – home – is above all, beyond all, it is waiting for us; not long now.

Home – Suggesting a glimpse of eternity in every-day life.