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Flowers in the desert

When I moved house, last summer, our garden comprised a lawn, a few shrubs and a sad, barren, weedy patch of soil. I took a mental note, could do with brightening up. Six months on, my little wilderness has suddenly become alive with assorted spring plants, which, as I write, are all about to burst into colour. What I'd thought was barren and empty, was actually nothing of the sort, but full of rich potential.



The lesson is not difficult to apply. Of course, it needs to be said that some barren places and difficult experiences, remain exactly that. The last thing we want, is well meaning people, trying to find 'silver linings' in our threadbare curtain of a life. And yet, it remains the case that many a challenging experience, for which the words 'barren' and 'rocky' are hardly adequate; are in the end, the making of us. At least it often seems that way, in retrospect.

Flowers bloom in the desert; eventually.

During the season of Lent, Christians attempt to enter the wilderness experience of Christ, culminating, of course, in a Good Friday cross. An absolute dead end, if ever there was one. And yet, on Easter morning, Christians sometimes decorate an empty cross with bright, colourful spring flowers.

A brilliant, powerful, pertinent sign, that out of what is barren, dark and miserable, new life can come.