



“ORDINARINESS?”

A poem by Brad Aaron Modlin

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“What You Missed That Day You Were Absent from 4th Grade”

Mrs. Nelson explained how to stand still and listen
to the wind, how to find meaning in pumping gas,

how peeling potatoes can be a form of prayer. She took
questions on how not to feel lost in the dark

After lunch she distributed worksheets
that covered ways to remember your grandfather’s

voice. Then the class discussed falling asleep
without feeling you had forgotten to do something else—

something important—and how to believe
the house you wake in is your home. This prompted

Mrs. Nelson to draw a chalkboard diagram detailing
how to chant the Psalms during cigarette breaks,

and how not to squirm for sound when your own thoughts
are all you hear; also, that you have enough.

The English lesson was that I am
is a complete sentence.

And just before the afternoon bell, she made the math equation
look easy. The one that proves that hundreds of questions,

and feeling cold, and all those nights spent looking
for whatever it was you lost, and one person

add up to something.

**What do I miss when I fail to pay attention
& be present to what’s going on within & around me
in the course of an ordinary day?**

**“By living the
Incarnation,
most often in
the ordinariness of
everyday life
and ministry,
we become one body
with one heart and spirit
— cor unum —
united in these
core values that
identify us
so deeply.”**

GC22 Enactments

**How do I experience
the “ordinariness
of everyday life”
as part of living “fully
human lives?”**

