

COTTINGHAM CHRONICLES

Seeing behind the façade

I have often travelled down the lake-side road on my way south and noticed the rows of mud houses perched precariously along the edge of Lake Tanganyika. Only recently have I had occasion to turn off the road. To my amazement I found myself in the middle of a thriving fishing village!



There was activity everywhere. Boats being repaired, nets being mended, lamps being cleaned, all in preparation for the next night's fishing. The last catch was quickly being sold or laid out to dry. People were shopping in little shops or fetching medicine from the pharmacy. Water was being collected from the lake for cooking and clothes being washed. There was a man having his head shaved and a woman giving her baby a bath.



All this I had previously missed because I had only seen the façade of mud houses along the road as I rushed by.



It made me stop and think! How often are we like that? We see a façade but miss what is behind. Even with the people we see every day, we accept their "OK" when we ask them how they are but fail to see the pain or fear or uncertainty in their eyes.

Instead of rushing past people and situations, seeing only the façade, maybe we could resolve to stop a while and catch the rich tapestry of detail that makes up our relationships and enriches our lives.



We have a model in this. His name is Jesus. A read through the Gospels will reveal how often he saw how things really were and did something in response. It is worth pausing to take a look.