



Facts

Today – 16th June – is the 167th day of the year, a fact that I guess you did not know? That means that we only have 192 shopping days to Christmas! That's another fact.

Facts are odd things: sometimes they are interesting, sometimes downright weird, and usually when you hear it for the first time your attention is caught. "I didn't know that," you might say.

A fact is something that happened. When we talk about someone as "matter of fact" we mean someone who doesn't add or embellish or even offer an opinion, they are straight down the line and get on with what they are doing.

Faith on the other hand is both fact and trust. I often get asked to prove that God exists; the fact is I know he does because of my experiences and understanding of the world he created and I live in, but that may not be enough for those asking.

Faith requires faith to believe in it. Facts – well, often they can be interpreted by the one telling them, so may not be the whole fact and nothing but the fact. My mom lives in a residential home. When I visit she will say "it's cold in here today", as I'm stripping off my coat and jumper and wilt in the heat of the room! Facts can be as subjective as faith.

Talking about my faith and love of God through Jesus is really hard when faced with someone who doesn't really want to know and just wants to wind me up. My faith and relationship with Jesus is very special and I don't want someone to make fun of it or deny my faith experiences. At a supermarket I was waiting in the queue to pay, and a boy in front of me, about 9 years old, spotted my cross.

"Do you believe in God?" he asked me.

"I do," I replied.

He then said, "I don't."

"That's OK," I said, "because God believes in you."

"Really! Mom did you know that God believes in me?"

And his Mom said, "Shut up and don't bother the lady."

Sharing faith can be so hard sometimes, and that is a fact!

I am always amazed by the boldness and courage of the early Christians to speak out about their faith, and I give thanks to God for those who have the gift of evangelism and can speak to many people about their faith. But most of us gossip the Gospel. We live it through what we say, do and are. May that be a real fact in our lives.

**Creator God,
through the love of Christ and power of the Holy Spirit
be a fact in our lives and the life of the world today.
Give us the courage to share our stories with others
and leave how they hear them in your care.
Help us live with the certainty that you are with us always,
just as Jesus promised;
through faith and trust we pray.
Amen.**