

From mundane trips to a trembling heart.

As in most homes, Saturdays can be really hectic and today has been no exception in ours. We have had - as we always do - a 'Big Breakfast' in order to boost the energy levels for the day ahead, followed by various trips...trips to the tip, to the shop, to the bank, to the carwash, back to the shop, (because I came away without the thing that I originally went for!) and finally to my daughter's school for a MFY festival (Music For Youth), where she was playing the violin in her school orchestra.

I have to admit that I went with a slightly heavy heart. I had so many other trips that I needed to make, so many jobs I needed to do. So, when I heard that the orchestra would be playing 45 minutes later than expected I decided to go home and come back. Yet as I walked wearily to the car, without even thinking, I found myself turning into the hall where the next performance was taking place.

This decision changed the course of my mood and of my day. I stood at the back of the hall as a 6th form chamber choir where beginning to perform their first piece - an arrangement of the hymn 'Love divine'. I have known this hymn since my childhood, however, as they began to sing I was completely swept away.

Swept away by the utter beauty of the young people before me.

Swept away by the purity of their voices.

Swept away by the energy and vitality radiating from their faces.

Yet, what struck me most was the absolute devotion and determination in which they were focussed on their conductor. Each one riveted on his every move. He had these 40 young men and women, all individuals, all very much their own people with their own gifts and talents, hopes and dreams, bound together beautifully in the words and music written by Charles Wesley, two centuries ago:

Love divine all loves excelling
Joy of heav'n to earth come down
Fix in us thy humble dwelling
All thy faithful mercies crown

Jesus, thou art all compassion,
Pure unbounded love thou art;
Visit us with thy salvation,
Enter every trembling heart

By listening to this beautiful hymn I was being gently reminded of the infinite Love of God. A love excelling all others and, indeed, the very presence of this tremendous love within my own 'trembling heart' and soul. I am learning that, it is in those times when I manage (like the choir did with their conductor) to remain focussed on God, and focussed on the graced presence of God's tremendous love within me and around me that I can be totally liberated from my worries and my troubles.



I am often shocked at how slow the progress of my learning heart is when it comes to this truth. I seem to need to be reminded again and again. Yet, amazingly, those reminders do keep appearing in the daily moments of my life. I was reminded this morning that I just need to be more fully aware of them. I am discovering that when I do look closely and attentively, when I keep a sharp focus, as did those members of the choir, then I am more in tune with God's presence around me. I can see these revealed graces as opportunities to open my life to the unconditional love that I am constantly being offered. Then, as they did today, my spirits soar and rise on 'Wings like eagles,' and my flagging heart begins to tremble in the knowledge that it is deeply cherished.

Paula 12.04.2011