

Week beginning 23rd August - The Albuquerque inn

I'm having a pint and a snack here in downtown Albuquerque. The Budweiser tastes weak; the Cajun-style chicken is spicy and tasty. It is stifling hot outside; the air-conditioning inside is heaven. A small child's face is all crumpled up with loss and fear – she has just inadvertently burst her red balloon. Her sister offers her own. One grandparent chides her; the other smiles. There's music in the background – country and western songs from the sixties. A murmur of conversation. The telephone rings. A loud laugh draws attention to itself. Another car sweeps into the parking lot. Bright with smiles, energy, mutual adoration and jewellery, two young black people flow out of the car and dance into the Village Inn. The telephone rings again.

I come back to my thoughts. So this is it. If I'm right, here in front of me the true nature of God is being revealed. Right here, right now the paschal mystery is gradually unfolding in all its ordinariness and in all its glory. All I have to do is be present – really present to it in a way that sees into the heart of things. This kind of worship is more than a superficial noticing; it is a becoming-one with what happens and therefore becoming one with God. It is the practical implication of what our best catechisms and our current Eucharistic Prayers keep reminding us about, namely, the presence of God everywhere – the God 'in whom we live and move and have our being'. Here around the busy tables of the Village Inn, if we tune in to the amazing mystery of the most ordinary daily happenings, multiplied a million times around the inns of the world, is the living-out of what we did around the Eucharistic table last Sunday. This was the celebration of what Jesus revealed in his life, death and resurrection, namely, that God is reaching to me in and between every beat of my heart, every breath I draw, every sound and movement around me, everything that happens, or ever happened, or ever will happen. So, as a human being and a Catholic Christian, what is this theological reflection saying to me then? It is simply saying – Wake up! Don't miss it! Be present to the miracle of the ordinary! (Travelling Light pp 188, 189)