

Daniel's Reflection for week beginning 6th January –

Calendar of Magic Moments

Mothers and fathers what has happened to you since this time last year? Was it for you a good or disappointing year? Above all have you noticed how your children have grown during last year? Have you really been attentive to the wonder of how they have changed, how they have become more mature, more adult, more independent, week by week? I really hope you have. Many parents confess to being too busy with one thing or another, to honour and celebrate the most beautiful family moments - all those golden moments when small miracles of grace are happening to their children, right under their noses. How important it is not to miss these windows of wonder.

I do not use the word miracle lightly. Your children are full of God - more full of God than we are. They are deeply spiritual. They still carry their original vision of heaven. They need you to notice all that happens to them. Not just to look at them but really see them. It's easy for parents to miss the unique, unrepeatable questions of their children, the little things they whisper and, above all, things they keep to themselves. May God comfort all those mums and dads who realise these truths too late.

This week we welcome another year. Let it be the beginning of a 'Year of Awareness of our Children' - of noticing their shy and fleeting moments of transformation, those hidden strides of soul that they would never take again, that come round only once. And you will notice tears on your children's faces - because there is no growing without pain, no loving without grieving. And, just as in our own mysterious lives, the seasons of light and shade, of joy and sorrow must pass over their incredibly beautiful spirits too. May our children's angels stay very close to them this year.

There is one more amazing thing to be said about the miracle of those magic moments in the life of your children. It is this. In such disclosure moments we see, if we are attentive, the inner beauty of a child's heart; but also, by virtue of the true meaning of Christian incarnation, we glimpse something of the loveliness of God, too. When transformation is happening in your growing son or daughter, God is becoming human again in our world. Whether your child is fascinated by the stars at night or the stars by day (such as One Direction), whether she is attracted to reading, daydreaming or playing, whether, as a future English captain, he is scoring yet again that World Cup winning goal or working dutifully at his books or around the house, there is no more accurate way for us to understand something of the mystery of God in our midst. It was to reveal this astonishing secret that Jesus came.

That is why I speak of the miracle of those magic moments. They are much more than merely human happenings. They are windows into the nature of God's own heart. 'Speak to us of God', the cherry tree was asked. And the cherry tree blossomed.

(Prism of Love pages 127,128)