

Easteride 2011

Week 5 - Echoes of Intimacy

The Risen Christ told St Theresa that he needed her eyes to look with love on people and places. 'The real aim', wrote Simone Weil, 'is not to see God in all things; it is that God, through us, should see the things that we can see.' And touch the things that we can touch. And hear the things that we can hear. The theological giant Karl Barth, somewhat infatuated with the music of Mozart, surmised that when the horn concerto is on at full swell, 'then our dear Lord listens with special pleasure'. And do we dismiss too soon the stories of children playing their drums for God, or squeezing God in next to them for a ride or a chat in their new, red and shiny fire-engines? After all. God is sheer joy,' wrote St. Thomas Aquinas, when asked why God made the world, 'and sheer joy needs company.'

In *Sheep Fair* Kerry Hardy writes:

I took God with me to the sheep fair. I said, 'Look,
there's Liv, sitting on the wall waiting;
these are the pens, these are the sheep,
this is their shit we are walking in, this is their fear.'
Then I let God sip tea, boiling hot, from a cup,
And I lent God my fingers to feel how they burned
When I tripped on a stone and it slopped.
'This is hurt,' I said, 'there'll be more.'

Such an awareness makes the familiar delightfully unfamiliar again. The senses become thresholds to the Mystery, revealing an astonishing immediacy and intimacy with the universe and its Creator. You find yourself doing things you haven't done since you were a child – chatting to God as you walk or drive along, pointing out this and that, as you round each new bend in the road. You re-enter, in a completely new way, the childhood of play and wonder you once lived – but left too soon

From 'Already Within, Divining the Hidden Spring', p109