

## Daniel's reflection for week beginning 17th September

### Every good story tells a deeper one.

As the credits roll at the end of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Lucy doubts whether the whole amazing experience could ever happen again. Yes, it can, she is assured but only if you keep your eyes open. It is the ordinary that contains the mystery, not the extraordinary. In another work, *Till We Have Faces*, C.S. Lewis tries to show how human love only blossoms when its divine sap is alive within it. The journey is not away from routine events, it is into the heart of things. Who would have ever imagined that the way to wonder could run through an old wardrobe! Without imagination our travels will be brief. Every good story tells a deeper one. Whether it be one of the *Narnia Chronicles*, or the home-spun tales of local life, the story is a powerful way of dealing with life-giving mysteries. In the beginning was the story. It was there when we were small. It was there before the doctrines of religion were formulated. It was there before the gospels were written. It was there before anything was written. And it still has not lost its imaginative power to open the hearts and minds to the wonder of life. . . That we are created in God's image is a truth to be assimilated in different ways, at different levels, from many media-and slowly throughout our lives. It is too wondrous to believe that we are living co-creators of divine beauty, blessed with extraordinary power and grace. Saint Simeon wrote: 'These hands of mine are the hands of God; this body of mine is the body of God because of the incarnation.' The mystic Meister Eckhart preached: 'You are God's seed. As the pear seed grows into the Pear tree and the hazel seed becomes the hazel tree, so does God's seed in you become God.' The poets and artists, the mystics and contemplatives are never tired of exploring this dimension of the mystery. For them the smallest particle of creation becomes a window on God's beauty. They see eternity in the grain of sand and infinity in an hour. Their intense energy is spent on revealing how the world is charged with the grandeur of God. They forever use images and symbols to catch the fire-fly glimpses of the extraordinary presence of the Spirit of Wonder beneath the seemingly superficial and ordinary. . . There is no dualism here. In a truly incarnational theology of creation, nature and Grace are not side-by-side or over against each other. The one is the context for the other. Neither is diminished by the other: they both complete each other. Unfamiliar perhaps at first, the day may come when we finally begin to understand, at the depth of our being, like second nature, that the human is the threshold to the reality of God. 'The gateway to heaven is everywhere,' wrote Saint Catherine of Siena.

(Begin with the Heart pp 29 to 31)