

Daniel's reflection for week-beginning 22nd August – Forever in God's Presence

God was delighted to become human. Like parents' love creates the baby, God's love, too, overflowed into a baby 2000 years ago. Like parents, too, God was delighted with us-and God is still delighted with us now. God became human so as to reveal an unconditional love for us. Nothing can stop God loving us always-no matter what. There is nothing we can do to make God love us one bit more, or one bit less. God wanted to become human, physical, so as to reach us, heal us, love us in that human form. (1John, 1,1)When we look at the baby Jesus in the crib at Christmas, these are some of the astonishing feelings that should flood our hearts.

When God became human in Jesus, God became human in all people and in all creation. Grace is everywhere. The great divide between the sacred and the secular is now over. To live is holy, to be is blessed. We are now called to see the face of Christ in every face; the heart of God in every heart. We are forever in God's presence-in every word we say, everything we do. With all our words, thoughts, actions we bless and heal and save those around us

Since the incarnation the ordinary has become extraordinary. God's love lies shimmering beneath everything that happens to us each day-in all our experiences. What we often regarded as merely human, merely ordinary, merely daily or routine, are nothing of the sort. They are already shining with grace. It is in the everyday things that we meet and experience the presence of God. But we need the eyes to see this. The same is true of the whole world, of our expanding universe, of the immense mystery of the cosmos. All are the beloved body of a God who 'so loved the world . . .'

Nothing can separate us from the grace of Christ; even in this life, we safely live in the heart of God, and we ourselves are now God's shining presence in the streets where we live.

(Extract from retreat introduction)