

**Daniel's reflection for week-beginning 17rd December -
Light Incarnate - *one Baby contains the mystery of the universe, consecrating every baby, ever born, and every thing, ever created.***

Christmas calls us to be God's spies as we penetrate the disguises all around us; to be water diviners who detect the liquid of life beneath the desert of our days; persistent beachcombers who discover the glimmer of God's gold along the leaden shores of our lives

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In an Advent reflection, Symeon the New Theologian (949 to 1022), saint and mystic, reminds us of that same evidence of God in our physical bodies too: "We awaken in Christ's body as Christ awakens our bodies. And everything that is hurt everything that is shameful, maimed, ugly, irreparable damaged, is in him transformed, recognised as whole, as lovely, as radiant in his light.'

The startling news of Christmas is that Christ is not primarily in the heavens, in the Scriptures, in the doctrines of the church, not primarily even in the Eucharist itself. For those who believe that our amazing God became common perishable flesh, Christ is primarily in our own experience, in the ordinariness of our lives and in the silence of our solitude. That is why God became utterly human.

In "Praying", Mary Oliver catches a whisper of the Word that hides in silence; It doesn't have to be the blue Iris, it could be weeds in a vacant lot, or a few small stones: just pay attention, then patch a few words together and don't try to make them elaborate; this isn't a contest but the doorway into thanks, and of silence in which another voice may speak.

Incarnation is about that other voice - in the silence of the spheres as well as the silence of our souls. Like another Christmas, every Mass, with its fragments of bread and wine, catches and holds a million galaxies and celebrates their divinity on a table. The small crib, the small Host tell the same astonishing story. The mystery of being itself, the source of life, is named and celebrated as God incarnate in the wonder of Christmas and Eucharist...

(Unmasking God pp125,126 127)