

LEARNING HEART: Weekly Reflections

March 2011

Week 1 - The Lion Inside

It was Good Friday in Rome. It seemed ages since I had felt the sun on my face. I was sitting outside reading the following story from Henri Nouwen's *Clowning in Rome*.

There was once a sculptor working hard with his hammer and chisel on a large block of marble. A little boy who was watching him saw nothing more than large and small pieces of stone falling away left and right. He had no idea what was happening. But when the boy returned to the studio a few weeks later, he saw to his great surprise, a large, powerful lion sitting in the place where the marble had stood. With great excitement the boy ran to the sculptor and said, 'Sir, tell me, how did you know there was a lion in the marble?'

As we moved around the Eternal City and drank in the beauty and pathos of the Pieta and the powerful anger of the seated Moses, we understood to some degree the claim of Michelangelo that he was but discovering and revealing the hidden form already complete within the marble . . .

Most of us are searching for our true selves. We have no choice. It is the quest for meaning and happiness, for love and for God . Once we believe that we are fashioned in Love's image, a Love that designed the cosmos and humanity as her home forever, then we fall in love with God.

(Year of the Heart: 1990)