

To Live is Holy (part 2) The Albuquerque Inn Week beginning 27th July 2014

At this point in my scribbling I pause to look around me. I stretch and breathe. My body is a little cramped but it feels good. I'm having a pint and a snack here in downtown Albuquerque. The Budweiser tastes weak; the Cajun-style chicken is spicy and tasty. It is stifflingly hot outside; the air-conditioned inside is heaven. A small child's face is all crumpled up with loss and fear – she has just inadvertently burst her sister's red balloon. One grandparent chides her; the other smiles. There's music in the background – country and western songs from the sixties. A murmur of conversation. The telephone rings. A loud laugh draws attention to itself. Another car sweeps into the parking lot. Bright with smiles, energy, mutual adoration and jewellery, two young black people flow out of the car and dance into The Village inn. The telephone rings again.

I come back to my thoughts. So this is it. If I'm right, here in front of me the true nature of God is being revealed. Right here and right now the paschal mystery is gradually unfolding in all its ordinairiness and in all its glory. All I have to do is be present to it – really and truly present to it in a way that sees into the heart of things. This kind of worship is more than a superficial noticing; it is a becoming-one with what happens, and therefore a becoming-one with God. It is the practical implication of what our best spiritualities of incarnation keep reminding us about, namely, the presence of God everywhere – the God 'in whom we live and move and have our being'.

Here around the busy tables of The Village inn, if we tune in to the amazing mystery of the most ordinary of daily happenings, multiplied by millions of times around the inns of the world, is the living-out of what we did around the eucharistic table last Sunday. This was the celebration of what Jesus revealed in his life, death and resurrection, namely, that God is reaching to me in and between every beat of my heart, every breath I draw, every sound and movement around me, everything that happens, or ever happened, or ever will happen. So, as a human being and a Catholic Christian, what is this theological reflection saying to me then? It is simply saying – Wake up! Don't miss it! Be present to the miracle of the ordinary!

The full revelation of God in the full humanity of Jesus has signalled to the world that, by virtue of Jesus' solidarity with the rest of creation, the rest of creation, too, has the potential to reveal God. Jesus thought with a human mind, loved with a human heart and forgave with a human compassion. It is to the extent that we are true in our human loving, authentic in our presence to our sisters and brothers, aware, compassionate and just in 'right relationship' with the fragile balances of the earth's resources, as Buddhists put it, that God becomes visible and tangible and knowable to us. Whenever, therefore, we are trying to be fully present to our own created essence, or to that of others, or to any created thing, even a drop of water or a grain of sand, that is when we aspire to intimacy with God.

(*Treasured and Transformed* pp146.147)