

## Daniel's reflection for week beginning 29th January

### When the soul dances

*Instead of being drugged and drained by relentless routine, we should sway to the present music of each new day and reconnect with the essence that we all share together.*

Each daybreak there is a timing and a balance to find as we set out again into another episode of the mystery of our lives. . . Writing about how we begin the dance of the new day, the poet David Whyte writes : 'We should apprentice ourselves to coming awake, treat it as a form of mastery. The threshold of waking , the entry to the day, is the musician's foot lifted to begin the beat. Miss the beat and you will have to come to a stop and start again. The dash and flair of the day comes from that foot hitting the floor after correct, restful anticipation.'

It seems to me that for our lives to be vibrant and healthy, the shadow and light in us, the demons and angels we carry, must be allowed their shindig in the spaces of our souls. It is good for us to jump at the chance to dance.

I had finished a pint of Guinness in Westport and was seriously and prayerfully considering having another one. At that instant of indecision I was suddenly swept off the barstool and on to the floor of a set-dance. I had finished a week's conference and had little difficulty in letting go into the swing and sway of the rhythm. At regular intervals a whirlingaround with three or four others took place, arms about each other's waists in a circle to the beat of the music.

This was a light and easy moment, effortless and flowing. It was the kind of holy way you want to live your life. You don't actually have to do anything. You just allow yourself to be swept into something bigger than yourself. And it is always a surprise. After such an experience Oscar Wilde wrote: 'One can live for years without living at all; and then all life comes crowding into one single hour.' That 'single hour' may well take the shape of what we call 'the present moment' or the 'ever-present now'. It is when two central, and often conflicting, strands in our lives harmoniously move together.

Unfortunately, this rarely happens. A dominant part of us exists in the strand of compulsions and fixations, of shallow and rushed repetition, of useless or even damaging thinking, of being drugged and drained by the relentless routine of our days. The other strand lives and loves at the more grace-filled level of being, in a more eternal kind of climate. . .

There is a Christian way of expressing all of this. The Franciscan priest Richard Rohr speaks of God's dance in us . . . and God is the dance itself. We are all, without exception, invited to join the Trinitarian dance – to make a fourth – so to speak – drawn into it, like I was by the three friends in Westport . . . All we have to do, for the paradigm shift of our lives, is to listen to, recognise and obey the faint but persistent cadence within that calls to us like a far wave. And when that happens, we cannot resist it.

*(Unmasking God pp 108, 109, 110)*