

Sacred creation in the everyday

In my three-year-old son's bathtime play, the Spirit still hovers over the water.

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Here is your ice cream cone, he declares. Satisfied and soapy, he hands me a cup full of bubbles. He eyes me intently, underneath wet curls.

“What flavor is it?” I know to ask. The joy sparks: *she sees it, too!* “It is chocolate-ish strawberry vanilla. It is served in a cone and a dish.”

“You are KIDDING,” I gape. “That is my favorite flavor in the world.” I slurp and snarf, devour the whole airy nothing in front of his damp beaming face, which dazzles into delight.

“Ah-ha!” he shrieks, splashing. “Yes! We will make some more.”

He is three years old. He knows what adults have forgotten. Make-believe and truth are both sides of imagination’s coin.

Creation is our work of every day.

Here we are at bathtime. The Spirit still hovers over the water. Faucets are waterfalls, bubbles are beards, cups splash with soup, anything becomes a boat.

Too often adults are mere spectators, flimsy facsimiles of what it means to witness. Distracted by phones, anxious by un-dones, already rushing to the next, tired and dull. We know; we do not wonder. The fire fizzled out. We forget that the ordinary vibrates at a pitch only children can hear. Who needs dinner—the train track to the North Pole is nearly finished! I didn’t hear you—we were building this rocket! You can’t move the cushions—that fort is the bears’ home and they need to sleep there tonight!

The day may start formless and empty, but lo, here comes the Holy again, moving upon the face of the deep. Then *fiat*: let there be light!

Imagination sizzles to spark and what we see as cluttered chaos is the beginning of fantastic and if we could just step back to behold the work—and them! The sweet sacred marvel of them! These impossible children, carbon and atoms and cells colliding to make toes and elbows, hands, and brains spilling with ideas—our mature minds would explode if we could capture the possibility of everything, let alone sink to our knees and whisper thanks to the Almighty for the gifts of these children, this day, our life.

God saw that it was good.

Behold is the best word, the way to wonder. Everything beloved is held within (childhood, too): awakening and awe, mystery and faith, hope and trust, incarnation and resurrection.

Behold the bathtime, sopping towels on the floor and twenty plastic toys left in the tub and water dripping down the walls again.

Behold the afternoon, grass-skidded knee stains and sweaty flushed cheeks and dirt-streaked kitchen, air electric in their wake.

Behold the winter, front door flanked with snowpant piles and soaking gloves and woolen hats curled up like grey wet dogs.

Behold the Saturday, table strewn with watercolors, board game dice, Lego pieces, marker tops, two baseball cards, one scratched CD.

Behold childhood. **Behold creation.**

Sing a new song as far as the note stretches for each one, fading so soon into adolescence, a modulated key, complex and challenging, harmony and discord, resolving someday into full adulthood, legato long and rich if we are lucky. But even the smoothest sweet cannot compare to that bright beginning. The first few notes when anything is possible.

When all the world is wonder. Each bathtime long enough to launch a thousand ships.

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