

GLIMPSES

What Do We Really Want?

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During these Advent days leading to the Day of the Mass of Christ's Birth, there is in song and story a huge celebration of the un-huge. Rudolf, the rosy-nosed unwanted who saves the night for Santa and his prejudiced dashers and dancers. There are the Littlest Snowflake, the Littlest Christmas Tree, the Littlest Star and of course, Tiny Timbits all could be centered around "Infinity dwindled to infancy" as G. H. Hopkins, S.J. once wrote. The Big God confounding reason by entering through the smallest human door.

I would like to ponder in my little way about this big mystery of the importance of the seemingly insignificant. Any relationship can be measured by how close the other gets to my own self, my very own flesh/heart. I would love receiving a little note saying, "My love for you was totally unfindable, unmakeable, and unshareable." That note would be wrapped around an empty throw-away pill bottle. Every gift is saying something very revealing of the giver. The empty bottle is overflowing, because of those accompanying words which both form significance within personal poverty. It would be a tremendous gift saying everything which cannot be purchased or made. It would not be a payment or a bonus, but a heart-to-heart statement of what love needs to be said and be heard.

When we were younger we wanted things which could make us happy by what we were going to do with them. New clothes, shiny toys, Doctor's kits, sleds, all meant for us to use, create and enjoy. Now in our older years, what do we want? We want to know that we are really known down to our secrets, jumping-joys, our heart-tears, our flesh-fears. For us humans, the more perfect a thing is the more of *flesh* it is. That sounds strange I know, because *flesh* is so weak, fragile, inconsistent. This, as a matter of spiritual fact, is the foundation of the sacredness of human sexuality, *flesh* within *flesh* saying perfectly what words can not say. So the *flesh* of one human person gives *flesh* to what God's love could not say in any other way.

As humans we can give only what we have. What we give is always partial, because we have only ourselves partially. So we give the little which becomes a sign, a "signum" of the partial attempt in expressing the total. The huge may dazzle and the flashy impress, but the really important gift is the words-wrapped thing whose tininess says as much as can be said of love. The truly-loved person longs to receive the lover's inexpressibilities; loves the impossibilities and the *little* does say it best. Shoppers become frustrated because they cannot find just the right thing. The more they love the person for whom they are searching, the more they will find that the right thing is not there, but here, within and so the frustration is resolved when the love does not stand behind the gift, but within it and explicitly expressed.

The biggest God invites the little young woman from the little town in the little country to fleshly unite Infinite Love through the fleshly intimacy of the human to be expressed in the smallest of the human form. The littlest tree, star, snowflake, Rudolf, Tiny Tim all line up as our meager attempts to comprehend it all. It all remains to be unwrapped, little by little.

It is only a glimpse and more than an eyeful.