

The Mirror in the Field

A Meditation by Joe Tetlow, S.J.

I imagine that I walk through a springtime field, riotous with wildflowers. As I top a rising hill, I come on a long mirror, standing in its pier. I see that the mirror faces the full sun. I walk around the mirror and note that it is a little old. It has lost pieces of its silvering. It is chipped in one place. I am surprised to find the mirror here and wonder what it means.

I walk around the front. I note that the mirror is liquid with light. It throws off so much light that I would go blind were I to look at it directly. Then I realize that the light is the sun's light. The sun pours its light down onto the mirror, holding nothing back of its power and brilliance. The mirror accepts the sun's light, as much as fits and as much as it can take. It does not let its little and large flaws matter; they are insignificant compared to the light the mirror accepts. Then the mirror throws back to the sun all the light that melts in its heart. It holds no light back. It throws all its light from its heart.

I am surprised by that. Wondering, I turn my face to the sun. I raise my face, and turn my hands outward. Now I am receiving the sun's light. I take as much as fits, as much as I can take. And I return its light to the sun, shifting in exquisite me as me the balance of the universe. I would like to fling back to the sun all the light the sun pours into me, from my heart. I ignore the flaws in me that hinder it. I give all I can. I rest with the sun on my face.

Then I slowly realize how like all this is to God and me. God is the sun. I am the mirror. God pours out into me many, many gifts, all of them a partaking in God's own Self. I take into myself all the gifts that fit. I take in as much as I am able, refusing to let my flaws and sins and limitations dim this loving exchange. I am on fire with God's gift of love. I accept His love. I return to Him all the love I can. I rest in this exchange of sunlight and love. I am content.

Then quietly I allow the fantasy to end. I say to God my Creator and Lord all the things that come from my heart.

From "Choosing Christ in the World: A Handbook for Directing the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola According to Annotations Eighteen and Nineteen" by Joseph A. Tetlow, S.J.