

Dearest Father Keane,

I just wanted to let you know that your words continue to touch and to mean so much to those of us who have been blessed to read your Sunday Reflections.

I know how it must be frustrating for you to find yourself less and less able to express yourself through speech these days. But in your writing, and even through just being, you are able to capture what many of us struggle to communicate with all our faculties about us. Indeed, I struggle even now to find the words to tell you how much you are loved, though when I sit with you in silence, I know how much I am loved by you.

I always look forward to reading your Sunday Reflections. But I was particularly moved by last Sunday's about the beautiful *Magnificat* prayer of Our Lady. I remember you saying it is one of your favourites—it has come to be mine too. Sometimes when I am feeling down, I suddenly feel my spirits lift, and I know this great grace can come from no other than the Father.

It is in these moments of deep gratitude and joy that the lines of the *Magnificat* come to me: 'My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.' How beautiful these words! Just as no less than all creation gives Him thanks, it is my soul, my entire being, that gives glory and thanks to the Lord!

'He casts the mighty from their thrones and raises the lowly. He fills the starving with good things, sends the rich away empty.' On one level, these words are a call to action to care for the needy, and they will no doubt bring comfort to the poor and the marginalized. But I realize now that these words should bring comfort to far more of us: they tell us that all who yearn and search for Him will not be turned away empty-handed. In humanity's deep loneliness and search for meaning, we find the greatest of all treasures. As you so beautifully said in your Sunday reflection: 'He has filled us all with good things in our wretchedness. He has taught me to stoop in reverence before the most unpromising of His creatures whom His mercy raises to greatness.'

Last week, I learnt that the words 'listen' and 'silent' were constituted by the same alphabets. Today's world is a cacophony of voices, often meaning very little, and it is only in listening in silence that we can learn anything of value. 'Be still', our Lord says, 'and know that I am Lord'. In your 'silence', your pithy writings, Father Keane, you have taught much to all who care to listen. And as Dorothy confesses to Jerry Maguire in a film by the same name, 'You had me at hello'.

In *Anam Cara*, John O'Donohue describes real beauty as 'a light that comes from your soul'. You are beautiful, Father. From the bottom of my soul, thank you for sharing your light with me.

Always yours,
the girl with apple blossom in her hair
31 August 2010