

Reverence

Nancy Ann Johnson

One of my unforgettable experience of reverence occurred in the house of God. Church was about ready to convene and, as I waited, I silently glorified God for all the wonderful blessings he had bestowed upon me. How marvelous was this day with the sun streaming through the mosaic windows filling the sanctuary with light from a heavenly source! In the distance church bells were ringing, proclaiming in resonant notes how glorious was this day of our Lord! As I sat there, I was filled with a spirit of reverence, for my attention was drawn to a man coming down the aisle to a seat near me. He was bent with age; yet his steps were as straight as the path he had chosen to follow. There were lines in his face that showed he had known the depths of despair, but his expression displayed a restful soul, peace of mind, and love for God. His deep blue eyes were as clear as ocean water; they were as radiant as the waking of a rosebud in spring — once dormant, but now lifting upward with undaunted heart to the supremacy of the skies.

Then I realized that I knew this man. I had forgotten the face, but the eyes were memorable. He was the little man who sold papers in the morning at the tiny shoe-shine shop downtown. This man, with holes in his socks and patches on his coat, would sell papers as long as he could each morning, even though he received only five cents for each paper. When the collection plate was passed, he did not have a crumpled bill to put in, but into the plate he placed a small silvery coin. More than any other person there, he gave all that he had. As the choir in angelic song proclaimed the glory of God, the Father, and each corner of the church resounded His praise, I was filled with reverence and humility so deep that I was hardly aware of the tears which slowly made their way down my cheek. Then I knew that as long as there are people who are as filled with spirit of holiness as he, the old man, the kingdom of God will come upon the earth.