



Advent Daily Reflections

December 5, 2024

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Today's reading is from Thomas Merton:

The beginning of love is the will to let those we love be perfectly themselves, the resolution not to twist them to fit our own image. If in loving them we do not love what they are, but only their potential likeness to ourselves, then we do not love them: we only love the reflection of ourselves we find in them

Today's Reflection is by Nancy Smith:

This really hit me as a parent. It's hard not to want your children to be a reflection of you—or at least the best parts of you. New York City is a hot bed of parental competitiveness; children are often seen as extensions of the parent. But it is also a joy to watch them become themselves, utterly different than you.

I'm guilty of this. All 3 of my girls are different from me in ways that I wish they were not. It's not that I am perfect at all. But for instance, it drives me insane that none of them read books like I do. I would love them to care about art and culture as well. I can't remember a time any one of them willingly went to a museum. I'm a gym rat and get so much joy out of physical activity but I can't get any of my girls to do as much as a power walk.

As much as I want them to be more like me, it is also a joy to watch them become themselves, utterly different from me. Each girl has a unique personality and talents that I don't. More than once I've thought "Where did you come from?" My older girls are science / tech whizzes and much more social than I am. They could fix a Spectrum problem blindfolded and go out 5 nights a week. I can do neither. The youngest has a sensitivity and creativity that is astounding at such

a young age. I am in awe at times. These gifts far outweigh the traits that they don't have from me. It is their uniqueness that makes possible to love them unconditionally.



Nancy Brooke Smith is a cradle Episcopalian, mother of three and enjoys upcycling discarded clothing. While she has been attending Holy Apostles for just a year, she feels she has found her home church.