

## After Sacrifice, Blessing Comes - A short, true story for the Day of All True Things

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*Fundraising team in Scotland, 1985*

Day of All Things is Creation Day, when we celebrate with wonder the unfallen beauty of the natural world. The beauty of God's creation fills us with the certainty of our Heavenly Parent's love and of His original plan for this world to be filled with that love.

Our fundraising time on Day of All Things in the spring of 1986 began with tragedy, but, as with all good stories, there was a happy ending.



*Fundraising team in Scotland, 1985*

Our team was in rural Scotland, selling pictures in the coastal villages and small towns. We had not long since started off, and were cruising along a country road on our way to the next local village.

Without warning, from a grassy bank beside the road, a mallard duck flew straight out in front of our van. The driver had no time to react. The vehicle struck the bird hard and she crashed into the opposite verge, killed instantly.

We stopped the vehicle and picked up the fallen bird, gently stroking her beautiful plumage. We were saddened by this tragic start to a holy day, especially one that True Parents had consecrated to honor and celebrate the beauty of nature. One brother on our team who was an amateur naturalist, expressed that the female duck whose life we had so abruptly ended was probably, at that time of year, not alone.

True it was. And alas, we had only to look a few yards down the hedgerow out of which the duck had flown to discover seven or eight tiny, fluffy ducklings, perhaps just a few days old. Incredibly beautiful and innocent creatures; it seemed so unfair that a terrible twist of fate had made them orphans at a time in their lives when they could not fend for themselves. Their mother, upon hearing our vehicle approaching on the quiet country lane, had flown out to divert attention from her babies, and in so doing had sacrificed her life.

This was certainly an interruption unique in my experience as a fundraising team leader. Despite the realization that trying to help eight orphaned ducklings might seriously impose on our important responsibility, these tiny, helpless, trusting creatures won over our hearts. And so we gathered the tiny fluffy balls of ducklings into a cardboard box and put them in the van.

I had no idea what I was going to do with them.

As the day progressed, and members came and went from the van, the situation gradually became more and more desperate. The ducklings escaped from their box and found their way into all corners of the van – into the picnic box, onto my shoulder, onto the dashboard, under the seats and even under the pedals. It was a miracle none of them was injured. I was also worried that the members would rapidly conclude I that if I could not take care of a few birds, I likely would do a poor job of organizing a team of human beings!



*Fundraising teams at South Farm, Stanton Fitzwarren, England*

Then something occurred that led me to believe that God really loves the creation too.

One team sister asked me to take her back to a small country house with the van to show some more pictures to the owners, who were interested to buy one or two. When we carried the pictures round the back of the house, there, behind the building, was a large man-made duck pond in an enclosure with ducks, geese and chickens that covered a large portion of the lawn. I immediately mentioned to the house owner that we had something else in the van besides pictures that I would like to show him. He was immediately curious.

Within the twinkling of an eye the deal was done. They got a nice set of framed prints for their home at a discount price, and we were freed from the responsibility of raising a family of ducklings, which were adopted and cared for in their little children's zoo. I like to believe those little ducklings grew up happily and safely with the other ducks there and lived long, happy lives....

And so we felt that God helped us honor the sacrifice of one mother duck, who died on Creation Day to teach us the greatness of His love for all things. And we learned that sometimes what seems like an incredible loss can hide an unforeseen blessing to come.

Let's share our love with the pure natural world and feel it blessing our lives. Happy Creation Day!