

## Invisible Mother

It all began to make sense, the way one of the kids will walk into the room while I'm on the phone and ask to be taken to the store. Inside I'm thinking, 'Can't you see I'm busy?' Obviously not; I'm invisible. The invisible Mom.

I was certain that these were the hands that once held books and the eyes that studied history and the mind that graduated from college - but now they had disappeared into the peanut butter, never to be seen again. She's going, she's going, she's gone!

One night, a group of us were having dinner. Janice had just gotten back from a fabulous trip. It was hard not to feel envious. But then Janice turned to me with a beautifully wrapped package, and said, 'I brought you this.' It was a book on the great cathedrals of Europe. I wasn't exactly sure why she'd given it to me until I read her inscription: 'To Charlotte, with admiration for the greatness of what you are building when no one sees.'

In the days ahead I would devour the book and discover some life-changing truths. No one can say who built the great cathedrals. These anonymous builders spent their lives working on buildings many never saw finished. They expected no credit. The passion of their building was fueled by their faith in God.

A story in the book told of a rich man who saw a cathedral workman carving a tiny bird on the inside of a beam. He asked, 'Why are you spending so much time carving that bird into a beam that will be covered by the roof? No one will ever see it.' And the workman replied, 'Because God sees.'

I closed the book, and felt that I could hear God whispering to me, 'I see you, Charlotte. No act of kindness you've done is too small for me to notice. You are building a great cathedral, but you can't see right now what it will become.'

I keep the right perspective when I see myself as a great builder. When I really think about it, I don't want my son to tell the friend he's bringing home for Thanksgiving, 'My Mom gets up at 4 in the morning to bake homemade pies.' I just want him to want to come home. And then, if there is anything more to say to his friend, to add, 'You're gonna love it there.'

As mothers, we are building great cathedrals. It does not matter if we are not seen, and if our names are not carved into the walls. And one day, it is very possible that the world will marvel, not only at what we have built, but at the beauty we have added to the world.