



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THIS SUNDAY MAY 6 & BEYOND”

Is Your Joy NOT Complete?



Sitting at an outside table at an Outlet Mall recently, I noticed quite a few little birds skitting about, chirping happily (it seemed happily) and occasionally landing at one of the small piles of leftover or tossed food on sidewalk and drive. What caught my eye was the behavior of little birds landing at

one of these compressed food sources, taking a little teeny bit and then flying off. And then return a little while later. From a human and economical perspective it seemed a waste of energy to take a peck, fly off using up their energy, only to later fly back in and taking another little bit. Or, as I also observed, birdies taking a little bite at one food spot, flying off, and then landing at a different food spot and taking a bit from that one. And again.

What, the first spot wasn't gourmet enough?

Well, that's the life of little birds. Skittish -- and probably a genetically learned behavior in order to avoid becoming a food source themselves for a larger bird!

The observation does lend itself, though, to see a bit of Jesus' teaching about what it means to “abide”, and by inference, what it means to NOT abide.

The birds are definitely not “abiding” in one food source. Does this have something to say, too, about how we relate to God? You know, the word “relate” is the root of “relationship.” Jesus wants us to relate to him - and only Him - in a constant way, not having a skittish relationship.

He desires that we relate to him in accepting him as the life we need. The relationship, then, should be a devotion to him and the life he provides through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Giver of Life. Jesus asks that our relationship with him be defined as “abiding.” And it's not just a desire; it is a promise he makes. If we will “abide” in him, our life will be full and meaningful, no matter what the circumstances of our lives here on earth are comprised.

Here's the quote. "Jesus said to his disciples, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete." (Gospel of John, Chapter 15, verses 9-11)

That sounds good to me. My concern, though, is when I find myself relating to God more like those little birds and leftover food sources. That is, there are times when I find that I'm flying in to God for a quick bite, like a needed prayer request, and then flying back off without just staying there and feeding! It might be important to ask yourself why this skittishness on your part.

We have our lives, of course, but Jesus would like us to bring our prayers and concerns, and just stay awhile with thanksgivings and praise, and adoration, and longer conversations in prayer, giving time for us to listen to him as much as we talk at him, as in some momentary feeding!

Abiding means constancy in relating; not a skittish drive-by feeding bite. What sign might there be for you to observe and pay attention to? That, taking Jesus' abiding consequences at that end of that quote, if your "joy" is NOT "complete," perhaps it is time to do some abiding! To use a different word to describe "relating", abiding means to be "connected." I encourage you whole-heartedly to find Jesus as your food and life source, and stay there!

Father Rob Eaton, Interim Rector

CALENDAR

SUNDAY: The Sixth Sunday of Easter

8:00a Low Mass (Church)

10:30a Solemn High Mass (Church)

—*The entrance to the church is on 6th Avenue—*

Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.

MONDAY: 7:00p (AA) Doctors' Group (Fireside Room)

TUESDAY: Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

THURSDAY Ascension Day Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

FRIDAY: AA Meetings

8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)

8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)

An Anglo-Catholic Parish in the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego
www.allsaintschurch.org