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John O'Donohue



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"El jefe le dijo: 'Muy bien, eres un empleado bueno y fiel; ya que fuiste fiel en lo poco, te pondré a cargo de mucho más. Entra y alégrate conmigo.'" —Mateo 25:23



Friday, December 16, 2022

Simple Joy

by Robbin Brent

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—John O’Donohue

As we continue to explore simplicity and joy, the quote above captures the importance of the simple yet essential practice of noticing each day what brings us wonder and joy. So how do we pay attention to what brings us joy? And when we figure that out, how do we sustain and grow the experience of joy?

I’ve found three spiritual practices in particular that keep me grounded and receptive to what brings me joy: gratitude, meditation, and a daily examen (see p. 51 for the Daily Examen prayer practice). For many of us, practicing gratitude wherever possible helps us to notice what brings us joy. Quietening the mind through silence creates space to listen more closely for what brings joy. And a daily examen provides an opportunity to look thoroughly and honestly at the day, identifying the highs and lows, the joyful and the painful.

What I’ve discovered is that it is the small things that bring me the most enduring joy: the smell of my grandbaby, the first birdsong of the morning, the sun’s reflection sparkling on the waves, the taste of freshly picked strawberries, the warmth of a hug from a friend.

When we are able to celebrate what brings us joy, we celebrate what truly matters: a sense of belonging, of loving and being loved, of experiencing and expressing joy, which is a perfect gift to offer, to ourselves and to others during this holy season of Advent.

Making it Personal: What helps you to identify and celebrate the simple joys in your life? Perhaps you might pause right now and name something small that has brought you joy recently. What might help you to continue to notice the small things that bring you joy for the remainder of Advent?



Turn

Advent Day 20

Turn away from the busyness of the world right now. Turn your heart and mind toward giving thanks for this time of reflection, refreshment, and renewal. Turn your attention toward how you will be resting tomorrow, and put things in place so you can make the most of your sabbath time.

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