

## Joy

The different kinds of joy. There is the joy of Christmas morning when you are child and you still believe in the perpetual magic of St. Nicholas and wonder at the birth of God. There is the Christmas morning joy, when you are a parent or a grandparent and watch the joy of little children.

There is the joy of Easter, so much more quantum in its comparison to Christmas morning joy, but so much more difficult for many people to grasp.

There is the joy of the simplest things, the tiny peeks one gets of heaven and earth meeting in the great wonder of this planet. There are the star bits on the water in the billions when the star sun, Sol, is just right. There is the smell of pine and sand on a warm summer day. There is the talk of the great white pines, when the breath of God, the wind, makes them speak. There are the glorious colors of florescent orange, red, lavender, and pink when the sun is low in the year, and falls into the sea with just a narrow slit of open sky between the never-ending winter gray clouds above and the ice-cold gray of the water below. For a few minutes, that gray is transformed into so many shades of these colors the water, clouds, beach, naked black and brown trees, pines, cedars and land itself glow in star made color. There is the joy of riding this same water's waves, transformed in the summer from the winter gray to a Caribbean blue, glass like in their clarity, a giant bathtub of fun.

There is the joy I felt as I read an obituary of a twenty-year old man, nephew of a best friend. When I read about his bravery and his accomplishments, my tears, that God water, were tears of the purest joy. That child made it. He got it right.

There is the joy I felt, the upwelling that always signifies joy of the real kind, as I watched or read about the people of Haiti, in the midst of physical tragedy so great, the extent exceeds the ability of the mind to grasp. Almost everyone lost a relative and certainly a friend. They lost their homes such as they were, the hospitals that might have cared for them, their churches and the refuge they might provide, running on empty with little if any food and water. Death with all its ugliness was everywhere, piles of dead people by the tens of thousands. In all of this, they sang hymns of praise and joy, often through the night, even as the ground shook again under their feet. They sang, "Jesus is Lord."

Yes, there is the joy of music, the music that stirs the inner parts of you, the soul and the heart, lifting you to mental heights that nothing else does.

There is the joy of giving and receiving, particularly when the receiver does not know the giver and the giver lets no one know when they give.

There is the joy of family, often taken for granted, until some great stroke of luck – the unexpected, or some great tragedy helps them stop looking at other things, things outside of their relationships with each other, usually material things that will never last past their very short time here on earth. The joy that comes with the realization of just how important we are to each other.

There is the joy of new life.

There is the joy of death, not immediate or even known to those left behind, but of a kind superseding any known joy here on earth. This joy people finally know, when they find themselves suddenly at Home, with all the right kind of things, things of the purest spirit and essence, real things, not the stuff we see here, and the Presence of Him Who made and is all....

... is beyond our wildest imaginations.

I am so thankful for the joy He gave, He gives, He is. Thank goodness He came at the center of time to set the record straight and to show us the way to true joy, our joy that is His joy. Love Him and each other was His main message.

I think that there really aren't different kinds of joy. They are all parts of the greater joy, the joy of Him. And His joy is...

... Well, I guess only the language of heaven could describe it, certainly not me.

In every breath you take may you know the miracle of His great divine mercy, grace, peace, love and of course His ever-present joy. As His people, we should be all about joy, regardless of what happens to us here.

After all, He does want us to be happy.