

This Fresh New World

A Prayer of Joy

Dear God, Creator of this fresh new world: The fields and the woods and hills are white again, not with snow but with the blossoms of the wild strawberry. There is snow too, here and there, and some of it is still piled high, still stubbornly holding out against the sun, still glazed. (It was from the snow, of course, that the strawberry got the idea for its blossoms.) Everywhere I see white petals.

The pussywillows have grown so big I could mistake them, at a distance, for chokecherry buds. The maple tree near the river has acquired a million little buttons. Pike and bass are spawning in the slough; and someone has set a trap for muskrats.

Sun and shade make queer patterns on the surface of the water; and in some lights I can clearly see the river bottom. (What clam came reeling home to his family last night? Look at the crazy trail he left!)

The ducks have returned to the Madawaska River. They are pretending to be jet planes, dive bombers, torpedoes, or snorkel submarines. I wish I could enjoy the icy water as they do.

A late snow falls. Great white flakes. And someone nearby has made a bonfire of last year's fallen twigs and branches. I love the smell of wood smoke. Lord, let it come up to You as incense for Your new Spring.



And let me offer with it a prayer of perfect joy!

There are people offering their pain to You as prayer. There are people offering prayers in atonement for misdeeds or grievous sins. There are people offering prayers of supplication, and prayers of petition, and prayers of faith and love and hope. But prayers of joy, I think, are very few. Yet we have most

need of You when we are most happy.

What do we need to make us happy? A new convertible with red leather seats? A final payment on the first mortgage? A boy friend? A well-paying job, or a promotion with twice as much money? A new suit or hat? A broiled lobster and half a keg of beer? A trip to Europe or some other expensive continent?

Once I worked for most of these things—and only for them. Now my happiness is made of little things. The sun rising in the blazing east. A marigold in full bloom. A sparrow staring at me from a post. A mushroom ready to pick. A hamburger or hot dog, with French mustard, or perhaps a dash of horse-radish, or even a plate of spinach with melted cheese. A bunch of wild flowers brought into my room. Sunset and evening star. The faces of happy friends. And sometimes a funny remark will make me happy for two dozen hours. My heart is full of joy!

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Pass It On! #17



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#17

Dear God of every day and every hour: Let me never be bored by Your miracles! Let me never yawn at any of Your wonders! Let me never take You for granted, as I am prone to do.

Let me enjoy the miracle of waking, when it comes to me; and the miracle of being aware that I am alive—a breathing, walking, thinking proof of Your love and mercy. It is a miracle that You made us, Lord. It is a greater miracle that You tolerate us.

Let me not slight any of the miracles I see every day around me. So many, many miracles! So many beautiful miracles! Let me see You in everybody—for every man and every woman, and every child on earth, is a miracle of Yours.

Spring is a miracle. Summer is a miracle. Autumn is a miracle. Winter is a miracle—and it lasts a long, long time, here, Lord, a very long, long time!

Every new day is a miracle, and so is every night. Food is a miracle. Clothing is a miracle. Houses are miracles too, since You gave us the brains to build them. Health is a miracle. Laughter is a miracle... Even death is a miracle—the greatest miracle of all—for it is both birth and death. It blots out all things that come between us, Lord, between the likes of You and the likes of me! It blots out everything, and brings me face to face with You.

I thank you, Lord, with a full heart, for everything. Give me the gift of appreciating You, and all You do.

From *I Cover God*, by Eddie Doherty.

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