

“Glance at the sun. See the moon and stars. Gaze at the beauty of Earth’s greenings. Now, think. What delight God gives to humankind with all these things. All nature is at the disposal of humankind. We are to work with it. For without we cannot survive.”

-Hildegard of Bingen

Visitation offered this quote on Facebook on Sept. 17, the anniversary of Hildegard’s death. Her words, “What delight God gives ...” touched me. I found myself remembering delight-filled experiences in nature. These experiences were sparked by one of my five senses (vision, hearing, taste, smell and touch). A sense would draw my attention to the moment, making me pause. I remember a moment of connection, feeling a peaceful calm and a joy bringing forth a smile of delight.

My memory holds a many treasured moments of pause and delight with nature. I would like to share two of these God-given delights. The first happened on a beautiful summer day. It was a quiet and calm day, with a very blue sky and brightly shining sun. As I stood in the beauty and space, I was touched by a gentle breeze that felt like an embrace, if not a kiss on the cheek. What delight God gives!



The second example of a delight occurred this autumn. The squirrels were very active in our front yard, attracted to our walnut tree. They were on the move to complete their annual mission. My living room window was open and I heard a hyper crunching sound. I quietly moved toward the window to see the reason for this noise. On the front porch was a squirrel standing on two feet, rotating the nut and gnawing on the walnut shell. It stopped suddenly, noticing my presence. It stared at me, holding the nut. It did not run away, only stared until it resumed gnawing on the nut. In a longer time than I expected, it continued at its task. Then finally, it ran off on its mission. What is the mission of a squirrel in nature? Squirrels dig up and eat most of the food they bury but some is forgotten. The nuts and seeds that are not recovered sprout in the spring and grow into plants and trees. I imagine Hildegard thanking the squirrels for their contribution to the “greening” of the Earth.

What moments have given you pause to delight in God’s gifts?

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