NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER DONATE NOW!
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

Escaping Unfreedom

Joyce Rupp | Jun. 25, 2010

As I was leaving for work one morning, I opened the door to the apartment and found a frightened, disoriented blackbird flying in the stairwell between the second and third floors. As it flew about in search of its freedom, the small bird kept hitting itself on the walls and ceiling. I opened the hallway door to the next floor where there was an open window for the scared creature to fly out.

I tried to shoo the bird toward the window, but it kept going back to the small stairwell space. As I hurried down the steps, I hoped that the panicky bird would find its way out. But that evening when I returned home, I sadly found an exhausted bird lying there, dead.

Later as I reflected on my day, I thought about that dead bird. It was such a vivid picture of disorientation and unfreedom. The bird had no sense of a larger world. It had fixed its sights on that small space, seeing it as the only reality, and had missed the freedom of the open window. It was too caught up in its own fear and confusion to see a way out.

The blackbird reminded me of a scripture story with which I have often felt strangely connected: the man who was out of his mind and roamed among the tombs, gashing and hurting himself with stones. The story tells us that Jesus came and restored the man ?to his senses? (Mark 5:1-20).

I am not exactly sure why that story resonates so much with me. I think, perhaps, it is the part of me that yearns for inner freedom yet hides from it at the same time, the place in me that resists coming home to my truest self. It is in this unfree place that I hide from what will bring me to greater wholeness.

How can I resist the invitation to personal wholeness, to be my truest self, when I am always yearning for this in my life? Yet, I do resist it. There are times when I allow my fears, my anxieties, or confusions to keep me from making a change in my life that would be for my growth.

Sometimes it has been something rather simple, like trying on a new style of behavior. For example, I recognize this happening in me when my life and work call me to be in a ?high extrovert? situation, meeting and greeting new people, entering into long hours of socializing and relating to strangers. The part of me that knows how delicious it feels to be an introvert wants to run and hide, to not reach out, to close my inner door and go home to solitude and quiet. But each time I fight my resistance to stay with my old introverted behavior, I have been

greatly enriched by the people whom I have met. They help me to discover the larger truths of my life. They give a balance to my introversion; thus, I am made more whole.

From *The Star in My Heart: Discovering Inner Wisdom* by Joyce Rupp

~~~~~~

Image not found
http://ncronline.org/sites/default/files/stories/images/oldimgs/j%20rupp.thumbnail.jpg

SIGN UP NOW [1] to receive an e-email alert each week directing you to Sr. Joyce Rupp?s reflections.

Want to know more about Sister Joyce Rupp? Visit her website. [2]

Visit **Ave Maria Press** [3] for a full selection of books by Sr. Joyce Rupp

---

Source URL (retrieved on *05/06/2015 - 14:39*): http://ncronline.org/blogs/escaping-unfreedom

Links:
[1] http://ncronline.org/../../email-alert-signup
[2] http://www.joycerupp.com/
[3] http://avemariapress.com/authordetail.cfm?authorID=145
~~~~~~