

Scripture for June 22, 2008

## Reflection from John Surette, SJ

*God, an insider God*

**In today's Gospel proclamation we heard the following words: "Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's knowledge."**

**In the religious imaginations of the Hebrew people and consequently of many Christian peoples through the centuries, God resides at a distance, separate, remote from Earth. God dwells in some heavenly realm above Earth. As many of the Psalms articulate it: "To thee I lift up my eyes." Or, as many of our present day prayers have it: "Send down your Spirit."**

**This image of an outside God resides deep within many 21<sup>st</sup> century people of faith including some of us in this chapel this morning.**

**The knowledge that God has of the sparrow falling to the ground... is it a knowing from the outside or from the inside? Is God an outsider God at a distance or an insider God up close? Does God look down upon the sparrow from above or is God present in some mysterious way within the sparrow and therefore knows from within about its falling?**



**Our 21<sup>st</sup> century meditation upon God's Universe suggests that there has never been and there never will be a time when God is not intimately involved, incarnated, embedded within the Universe and therefore within our own lives and the life of that famous sparrow.**

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1515 W. Ogden Ave.  
LaGrange Park, IL 60526  
[www.csjthewell.org](http://www.csjthewell.org)  
[thewell@csjlagrange.org](mailto:thewell@csjlagrange.org)

**Our meditation suggests that God is an insider God, present within the unfolding of the Universe of eons of time. Because of that presence, God knows and feels the exhilaration as well as the suffering of all creatures from the inside...even the death of that sparrow!**

**In our evolving Universe every being and every activity flows from the inner presence of the Divine. The God of the evolutionary story is a life-force radically committed to cosmic embodiment.**

**And so it is a mistake to identify the Divine otherness with the view that God guides the Universe from outside. Rather, the Divine otherness necessarily flows into the Divine presence within everyone and everything.**

**Because our God is an insider God, we always find ourselves within God's compassionate love. As an embryo in our mother's womb each of us was in the Divine compassionate embrace. At every moment in our past – our best moments and our worst ones – we were in God's compassionate embrace. At this present moment we are in the Divine compassionate embrace.**

**Because our God is an insider God we can live our lives in the firm faith that God can meet us in any situation, however dire, and offer new possibilities. This offer of new possibilities for our personal, communal, and planetary lives becomes the basis of our hope and because of this hope we can find the motivation to reach out in love to everyone and everything.**

**Divinity abounds in and around us and so in these modern times we are invited to hear and respond to an invitation that has been deeply embedded in our tradition for centuries...it is the invitation to "Find God In All Things!"**

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