

“...you will receive power when the **Holy Spirit** comes on you;” Acts 1:8

In the midst of all the weeks and months of drastic change, I welcomed a familiar sound this week. Writing at my desk, I heard the <HONK<HONK<HONK< of Canadian Geese flying over my home. I ran outside to see my old friends whom I’ve loved for many years from my Wisconsin tundra days. I counted it as a blessing to discover that geese also fly overhead every morning and evening for several weeks in winter in the desert.

I once based a sermon on an article about geese and Christians recounting the way geese fly in formation, taking turns at the front leading and riding the current in the back all the while honking encouragement to continue the journey. Just so, Christians would do well to imitate geese in cooperating and encouraging each other. In a quest to find the old article, I found a new one included below. It opened up more profound information about the link between geese and Christianity. I share it with you and hope you enjoy learning about this unlikely symbol of the Holy Spirit which both comforts and disrupts us!

The Holy spirit blesses us with many gifts while also challenging us to new and unseen callings! When you feel weary, listen for the geese overhead as an encouraging sign that the Spirit is with you - leading, guiding, comforting, nudging, stirring, challenging, and calling. I’m discerning how the Spirit is stirring and spurring Desert Cross. Join me in prayers of discernment! And then Go, in the peace and power of the Holy Spirit, to love, serve, and encourage your neighbor. Just don’t HONK at them!

In the Spirit,

Pastor Andrea



How The Wild Goose Became A Symbol Of Vigilance And The Holy Spirit

by Philip Kosloski - Aleteia.com

What is sometimes seen as a silly little bird is venerated as a heavenly sign in Christian art. In the Roman tradition, geese were seen as a symbol of providence and vigilance ... St. Isidore of Seville recounts the virtues of geese in his writings. “The goose took its name [anser, in Latin] from its similarity to the duck [anas, in Latin], or because it swims frequently. Geese watch at night and give warning with their noise; they can smell humans better than any other animal can. Geese warned Rome of attack by the Gauls.”

Interestingly, the ancient Celtic people saw the Holy Spirit not as a hovering white dove but as a “wild goose.” The meaning behind this peculiar choice is because they saw how the Holy Spirit has a tendency to disrupt and surprise. The Holy Spirit moves in our lives in an unexpected fashion, similar to the actions of a wild goose.

This reality is constantly reflected in the lives of the saints, who often had their own ideas regarding how they would follow God, but were then led in an unexpected way. St. Francis of Assisi is a perfect example, a man who heard the voice of God to “rebuild my church,” and set out initially to rebuild the physical church of San Damiano. Francis thought he was following God’s call when he gathered bricks to repair the church that was falling apart. However, the Holy Spirit surprised him by redirecting his efforts to the Church at large, building up a spiritual foundation for a religious order that would change the world. So the next time you set out on a “wild goose chase,” it might not be you who are chasing the goose, but the “goose” who is chasing you!