

A Saint in Disguise  
*A meditation on All Saints Day*

*Romans 8: 33-39*

Who will bring any charge against God's chosen? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup>Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. <sup>35</sup>Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...

<sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup>For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup>nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Today is a holy day. Among all the saints in disguise this morning, we also set aside a time to remember and grieve and celebrate those who are no longer with us. Because of the pandemic haven't had a chance to memorialize them. So today is the day, a holy day.

I'm not sure about you, but every so often I bump into something which reminds me of someone we've lost. It's as if the veil thins and the walls between this world and the next come down, and there is a sense that we aren't as separated as I may have thought we were. The other day I was thinking about Bea when I then saw a sign with a bumblebee on it hovering over some flowers. It read, "Bee Happy!" and it looked just like the sign Bea had hanging on her front door. Or as we sang, *I Danced in the Morning* it took me to a place where I imagined Carol twirling and swirling freely, finally free from the walker she relied on to get around. Or how *after* I picked the Romans 8 passage for today, I remembered that this was the passage Dick Patterson used to bring comfort to parents after they lost their child to cancer. Not even death can separate us from God's love. Hallelujah for that. Maybe you've experienced a moment when a bird begins to sing on a windowsill, or a butterfly lands on our shoulder shortly after a loved one leaves us, as if to tell us they are okay and will somehow always be with us. Perhaps it comes as something obvious, but my hunch is that it more often comes to us in a disguise.

Some of you might know that a dear friend of mine, Mike, died from alcoholism a couple years ago. He was always trying to do things for other people, but he couldn't quite ever get himself out of the hole. He was 42 years old when he succumbed. On the anniversary of his death his sister put a freezer for sale on Facebook Marketplace. Within a few minutes, she received a message from someone who worked for a non-profit wondering if she would be willing to donate it to them. When she asked what the non-for-profit did, they responded that they were a halfway house, who helped alcoholics get back on their feet. Coincidence? Perhaps. But she says it was Mike reaching out from beyond the veil encouraging her to help them in honor of his memory.

Chances are we may have experienced something similar ourselves. An energy, or a presence, or perhaps we had a dream in which our loved one visited. And maybe it was an obvious thing, or perhaps it was something that happened in disguise.

Today is a holy day. It's a day when tradition says the veil thins and we honor those who have shared God's love with us. And nothing can separate us from that love. Not even death. And for that, all the saints on this side of the veil say, Amen.