



Frère John Martin

The Place of Joy in the Inner Life

My friends,

When the heart turns inward, we often begin with silence, with longing, sometimes with tears. But at the centre of that silence there is something radiant, tender, and indestructible — joy. Joy is the secret language of the soul.

It is the fragrance that arises when we come into harmony with the Source of life.

In the Christian path, joy is not a feeling that depends on what happens.

It is the fruit of the Spirit — the sign that love has taken root within.

Jesus said, "I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you, and your joy may be full." (Jn, 15:11)

It is a joy born not of having, but of being — being at one with God, with creation, with all.

Even in suffering, that joy whispers: "All shall be well."

In the Hindu tradition, the sages say that the very nature of the Self is ānanda — bliss.

When the veil of ignorance falls, one discovers that the essence of existence is not struggle but delight.

The Upanishads call the Divine sat-chit-ānanda — being, consciousness, bliss.

Joy, then, is not something added to life — it is what life is when we awaken to our truth.

In Buddhism, there is a joy called muditā — the joy that rejoices in the happiness of others.

It is the joy that flows when the self is free from comparison.

It is serenity turned into song.

When we no longer seek to possess joy, we begin to share it — and in sharing, we discover freedom.

In Islam, joy is called farah.

It blossoms in the remembrance of God — dhikr.

The Qur'an says, "In the remembrance of God do hearts find rest."

When the soul remembers its Origin, it finds again its smile — a peace that no storm can steal.

In Judaism, the psalms sing: "You have turned my mourning into dancing."

Joy, simḥah, is born of covenant — the joy of being known, of belonging.

Even after exile, the heart sings because God is still faithful.

Joy becomes the song of remembrance: "We are not alone."

In Sikhism, the word is anand — bliss.

The Anand Sahib begins with these luminous words:

O my mother, I have found the True Guru, and my soul is filled with bliss."

When the soul unites with the Divine Name, everything becomes music.

The world does not disappear it dances.

Life becomes a celebration, because the One we sought outside is discovered within.

Brother John Martin

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