

Seventh Day of Christmas, 12/31 – Seven Swans a-swimming



Scripture: For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. **Romans 12:3-8**

In this passage out of Romans there are seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, leading, and compassion*. **The seven swans a-swimming refer to these gifts of the Spirit.** Gifts of the Spirit are precious and beautiful. But they are not given so that the receiver will be arrogant or boastful. But the gifts are given so that God's work in the world might be fulfilled.

The connection for me between the Spiritual gifts and the swans is in the beauty of both. That God would gift us with these attributes is astounding! That God would long for us to participate in what God has imagined in the world is amazing to me. Even though swans are stunningly beautiful gliding across the pond, they have moments when they are aggressive and fiercely protective of their turf. It sounds like us humans. At our best of times we are beautiful in life, work and love. At our worst of times we are fearful, territorial and wounding to others. So, what gifts has the Spirit given you? We are all gifted. The challenge is in using them for God's glory.

*Note: Additional spiritual gifts are also listed in 1 Corinthians 12.