



Daily Reflections

September 22, 2020

Scripture

Luke 8:19-21

As Jesus passed by,
The mother of Jesus and his brothers came to him
but were unable to join him because of the crowd.
He was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside
and they wish to see you."
He said to them in reply, "My mother and my brothers
are those who hear the word of God and act on it."

Our Scripture Reflection

To become a part of Jesus' spiritual family means to enter a relationship with Him that transcends every other relationship even those which are biological in nature. He is the Lord of everlasting life and the only One Who can grant us such a life, one that never ends. In our Gospel, He teaches His earthly family and us this most important lesson: To be included in His family means to hear the word of His Father and act on it.

Food for your Journey

Religious people are more satisfied with their lives than nonbelievers, but a new study finds it's not a relationship with God that makes the devout happy. Instead, the satisfaction boost may come from closer ties to earthly neighbors.

According to a study published in the journal *American Sociological Review*, religious people gain life satisfaction thanks to social networks they build by attending religious services. The results apply to Catholics and mainline and evangelical Protestants. The number of Jews, Mormons, Muslims and people of other religions interviewed was too small to draw conclusions about those populations, according to study researcher Chaeyoon Lim, a sociologist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

“We show that [life satisfaction] is almost entirely about the social aspect of religion, rather than the theological or spiritual aspect of religion,” Lim told LiveScience. “We found that people are more satisfied with their lives when they go to church, because they build a social network within their congregation.” ...

While a higher number of secular close friendships were also associated with life satisfaction, church friendships seem to involve something that lifts satisfaction even more, Lim said.

Additional research by Lim and [Robert] Putnam, reported in the book *American Grace: How Religion Divides Us and Unites Us* (Simon & Schuster, 2010), has found the religious propensity toward charity and volunteerism to be connected with close church friendship, as well.

—Stephanie Pappas, “Why religion makes people happier (hint: not God),” LiveScience.com, December 6, 2010. Retrieved March 19, 2019.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, I want to be a part of Your spiritual family. I desire to spend eternity with You. Keep me faithful to You and help me to grow in my ability to love You with my whole heart. Amen