



Digital Commons@

Loyola Marymount University
LMU Loyola Law School

Spiritual Essays

Center for Ignatian Spirituality

2011

Spiritual Chimes

Fr. Randy Roche

Loyola Marymount University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/spiritualessays>



Part of the [Catholic Studies Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Roche, Fr. Randy, "Spiritual Chimes" (2011). *Spiritual Essays*. 158.

<https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/spiritualessays/158>

This Essay is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for Ignatian Spirituality at Digital Commons @ Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spiritual Essays by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@lmu.edu.

Spiritual Chimes

From where I live, I can hear the "Big Ben" chimes of a chapel tower clock sounding on the quarter-hour. Many households have chimes instead of doorbells, or a clock with one or more chimes, or an arrangement of wind-chimes. Sets of chimes are usually tuned, each chime to one unchanging musical note, so that, large or small, a group of them can be made to play the same kind of music as any other set anywhere in the world. A single chime makes a pleasant sound, and can be used to count the hours. But an array of chimes is required to play a tune: their single notes are clear and distinct from one another and are the basis for sounding out the music that we recognize.

We can think of "spiritual chimes" as individual experiences of clear understanding that we consistently hear within our minds, and resonating in our hearts as we prepare to make decisions. Sometimes we recognize these inner words or expressions of basic operative truths, such as "be careful," "think first," or "do not jump to a conclusion." These sayings, beliefs, or principles are within us. We have heard them, listened to them, and became accustomed to them as part our decision-making process.

Though we might be more familiar with one recurring "note," that guides us, such as "do the right thing," we most likely have developed a group of "chimes" that sound in different configurations according to the decisions we are making at any particular time. One might seem louder to us than others, but they complement one another, and provide for us "tunes" that become, throughout our lives, ever more appropriate for each situation.

Though our spiritual chimes are unique, as befits us as individuals, yet we can find familiar resonances in others' collections. Our words and descriptions will differ if we talk about them, but we have much in common, just as physical chimes of different sizes and shapes can yet sound with the same notes, even if one is louder than the other.

While it is not necessary for us to keep a list of our spiritual chimes, we might recognize one or other of the following examples as being similar or related to some of those that we have acquired so far. "This is right," when a pending decision is as clear to us as the sound of a chime. Or, "face the fear," rather than be governed by it. Or perhaps, "seek healing" rather than fight against hurts or deny them. Another might be, "people more than things" as opposed to material gain over the welfare of humans. "What will help" as an attitude of service and caring. "Depend upon God" rather than believe in absolute self-creation. Finally, "now" instead of "sometime" might be for us a guiding rule.

We acquire chimes as we grow and develop. Each is a noteworthy grace that comes to us at a particular time, and which we incorporate into our way of proceeding. The Artist who provides us with the chimes, knows the materials - our hearts and minds - and how best we can obtain quality sound from them. Though we are individuals, we are made such that we can "chime in" with others in a great variety of faith communities as small as two persons who share a vision, or as large as a church celebrating both our needs and accomplishments.

Spiritual chimes do not give us the time of day, which is a mere fact, but they give us support for those decisions which "make our day."