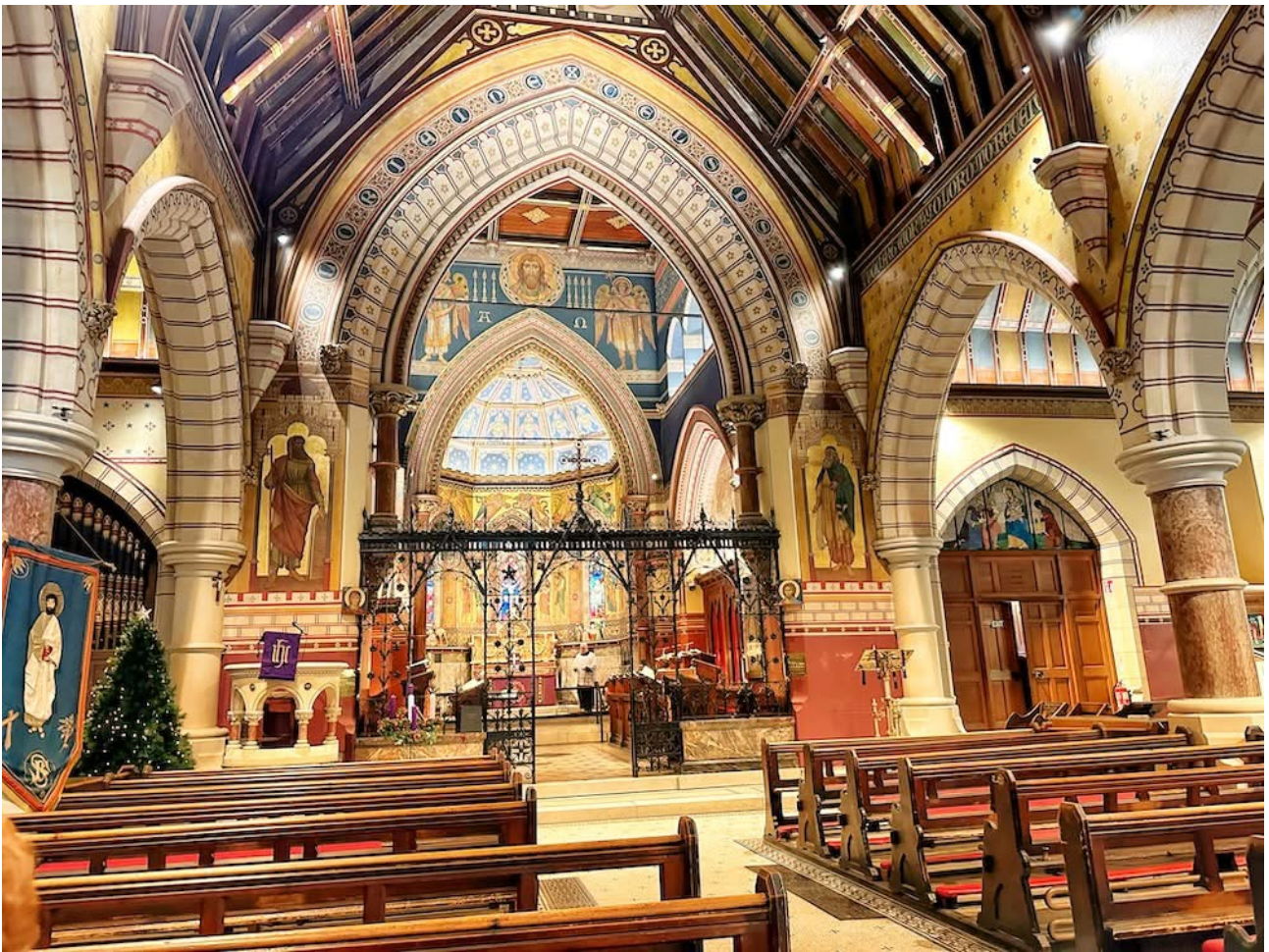


Speaking to the soul



Joy

Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Won't she light a lamp and sweep the entire house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she will call in her friends and neighbours and say, "Rejoice with me because I have found my lost coin." Luke 15:8-10

Almost everyone has got a moving story to tell of the time when they lost something very precious. For me, it is normally my keys, glasses or mobile phone and, most of the time, the search concludes successfully within a few anxious minutes. I have never lost my wedding ring, but I have heard many heart-rending stories of people who have. The woman in this story had lost one of the ten silver coins that formed part of the headdress given to her when she got married. There was no point in telling her that she still had nine! The coin was of massive sentimental value, and losing it caused her great distress.

The pain of losing something as precious as the silver coin is massive. It's gut-wrenching and it dominates life. We struggle to settle to anything else. Then the moment of discovery comes, and the joy is overwhelming. It would be unthinkable to keep it to ourselves. Everyone needs to know about it! Jesus says that's exactly how it is in heaven when a sinner repents. When even one person turns to God in repentance, heaven has a party!

Joy is a big theme in the Bible and it is God's response to everything coming together. Sin is the opposite. Sin always spoils, tarnishes and destroys and leads to certain misery. When we live in step with God, the outcome is joy because he sees everything coming together in the way that he wants. God's supreme desire for us today is to share in his joy, and we will do precisely that as we let his Spirit fill us and direct us.

QUESTION

What brings you most joy in life, and in what way do you think God shares in that joy?

PRAYER

Loving Father, thank you for the joy that you pour into my life when I live in step with you day by day. Amen

Photo - Parish Church of St Bartholomew, Dublin

