

Today's Advent Devotional is provided by Jim Garner

I particularly like the second verse of Joy to the World, primarily for its imagery of nature.

Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns:
let all their songs employ
while fields and floods rocks hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy.

After moving to DC seven years ago from Kansas I am often asked what I miss about



my home state. I usually and quickly respond: "the sky." But I think that answer is shorthand for loss of the connection with nature.

Although I miss the expanse of nature offered in Kansas, God has provided me a consolation here in DC. You see, DC is blessed with an abundance of mockingbirds. These wonderful birds were described by the character Atticus Finch in Harper Lee's book *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

He said:

"Mockingbirds don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don't eat up people's gardens, don't nest in corncribs, they don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That's why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird."

Mockingbirds find the highest point in their area and then launch into marvelous medleys of birdsong. Whenever I hear one, I stop in my tracks, find the bird, and listen to a portion of their concert -- as they repeat their sounding joy. It provides me a bit of interaction with nature here in the bustling city.

Open [this link](#) to hear a mockingbird singing in DC:

And here is [another link](#) to a mockingbird singing:

Joy to the World-- God's creation. Joy to the World -- God's ongoing gift to each of us.
Repeat the sounding joy!!

Prayer: During this Christmas season, when we find ourselves caught up in the hectic pace of things, help us to focus on the gifts of your creation and find and share some joy to the World around us. Amen