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## Keeping the feeders full

By Elise L. Moore, C.S.B.

A neighbor maintains bird feeders in back of our condo. There are the regulars—cardinals, Carolina chickadees, and sparrows, and then there are frequent visitors—blue jays and mockingbirds. They congregate day after day, rain or shine, very dependably. The warblers visit on their way through town a couple of times a year.

Every so often I notice a new bird eyeing the feeder. If it's brave, it'll sneak in and grab a couple of seeds, then sprint for cover. Liking the sample, it might return and perch to take a deeper look. But the regulars don't encourage newcomers. Unless the newcomer is persistent, it will probably have to look elsewhere.

Bird feeders are like church in one way. No birds came to our backyard when the feeders were empty. Within a couple of weeks of filling the feeders, birds began visiting regularly. If the feeders aren't maintained, the birds eventually go elsewhere. An alive church is like a full feeder. It's full of genuine love, spirituality, compassion, spiritual understanding, and evidence of healing. Visitors and newcomers—no matter how new they may be to Christian Science—feel warmly and genuinely welcomed.

I visit vibrant Christian Science churches all the time. It's not the size of the feeder (the building) or even the number of people. It's the Soul-filled atmosphere that makes a church feel alive. You know, I think folks would flock to a church like that. Actually, I know folks flock to churches like that. I've visited Christian Science churches where members are replenishing their metaphysical feeders with inspiration, through consecrated individual study and weekly coming together at church to share insights and healings. Visitors come, keep coming, and add their inspiration. Sometimes they join and start filling the feeders, too.

It takes only one individual to keep a bird feeder full. I want to be a feeder-filler and keep the atmosphere of my church full of inspiration, spiritual love, grace, spiritual power. You can, too!