



From the Desk of Dr. Attreya

The following is one of the many insightful pieces from the mystic Fr. Anthony de Mello's book, *The Song of the Bird*.

JESUS AT THE FOOTBALL MATCH

Jesus Christ said he had never been to a football match. So we took him to one, my friends and I. It was a ferocious battle between the Protestant Punchers and the Catholic Crusaders.

The Crusaders scored first. Jesus cheered wildly and threw his hat up in the air. Then the Punchers scored. And Jesus cheered wildly and threw his hat high up in the air.

We may like to read this story to our children and invite them to discuss the insight. They may draw lessons on how to enjoy the games while at school.

And outside the school too later in life. Though they go by the term 'games', what we witness today are fights. It is not only boxing but cricket, tennis, football and the rest are all unholy fights. In a fight, the rule is all is fair in love and war. In a fight, the rule is I WIN at whatever cost.

Not only do the players take that stand but also those who come to witness the 'play'. The fans on either side, I mean.. The gentlemen games are no longer.



TRAIN CHILDREN TO ENJOY GAMES



This seemed to puzzle the man behind us. He tapped Jesus on the shoulder and asked: "Which side are you rooting for, my good man?"

"Me?" replied Jesus, all excited. "I'm not rooting for either side. I'm enjoying the game." The questioner turned to his neighbour and sneered, "Hmm, an atheist!"

We took him up on this after the game. Was he in the habit of never taking sides? "I side People rather than Religions," said Jesus. "Human Beings rather than Sabbath"

The media assumes that we all 'enjoy' the fight and they pander to this assumption. They use warlike language. Because of the modern high stakes in competitive games, we can understand the behaviour of the players. It is difficult to understand the warlike behaviour of the audience. The audience' stand is: My boys should win at any cost. Other than physically manhandling the referees, the supporters will do any thing.

It is true games are games and we should play our best but then the guidelines should be three in number.

One is we will abide by the agreed rules, regardless.

Two, we win some and lose some.

Three: Let the better men win.

That is as far as the players go. As far as the audience goes, we may use the following guideline.

In a game, the process makes for enjoyment and not the product. Let us enjoy the game as played and play down the outcome.

While at school, we may help our children learn to enjoy games both playing and witnessing.

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Instead of cursing the dark, light a candle.



Not the cry, but the flight inspires the flock to follow