

# Look, up in the sky! It's a blimp!

As I was enjoying an amazing lunch with my mother and sister Treasa yesterday, I looked up and was startled to see a blimp passing by.



"Oh my goodness, there's a blimp!" I said.



We were eating al fresco by a courtyard at the Ambassador Dining Room—which is as elegant and luxurious as it sounds—and the blimp sighting seemed like the icing on the cake for a decadent birthday lunch.



"Oh, yes," my mother said, glancing up. "We saw that earlier."

We watched it fly by and I didn't think of it again. I had other things on my mind, such as this amazing Indian dish featuring lump crab.



But I digress.

Then, after I picked up Leo and Daniel, we were driving home and I saw the blimp in the sky.

"Look! Look!" I called out. "There's a blimp!"

The boys got so excited.

"Where is it? Oh, I see it, Mama! Do you see it? It's not very big, is it? Oh, wait, it's behind those trees! Now it's gone....Oh, now I see it again!"

It was such fun. As we drove around the beltway, they kept spotting it and losing it and finding it again. I was as excited as they were, although I had to pay more attention to the road than they did.

How wonderful, I thought, that I had the chance to be with them for their first time seeing a blimp. And when the blimp had disappeared for good, I said so.

"That must have been the first time you saw a blimp!" I said.

"No, Mama," Leo said. "Actually we saw it today at school."

"You did?"

"Yes," he said. "We saw it three times when we were out on the playground."

"Oh," I said, feeling a bit...deflated (pun fully intended). "Did your teachers talk to you about it?"

"Yes, Mama," Leo said.

"What did they say?" I asked.

"They said, 'Look! A blimp!'" Leo said. Apparently they know as much about blimps as I do, which is not much.

At first I was a little disappointed that I hadn't been with the boys for that first sighting.

Then I started marveling at the joy and pleasure they were able to bring to this repeat experience. For children everything is fresh and new, even if they are seeing their 2,000th butterfly, watching *The Incredibles* for the 500th time, or visiting the library yet again.

For our preschoolers, seeing the blimp for the fourth time in one day was still an absolute thrill. Yesterday's birthday puts me even farther away from being 3 or 5, but I can certainly cherish the ability to experience even the ordinary as extraordinary.

And, as I prepare to attend Mass tomorrow, I am thinking of my sons' excitement. I can't tell you how many times I've heard God's Word or seen bread and wine become Jesus' body and blood. It would be easy to think of Mass as the same each and every time.

But tomorrow I'm going to try to be more like my children and remember that even if I've experienced it all before, this time I am experiencing it anew, with new love, enthusiasm, and joy.