

Living the Spirit Knowing God

As I begin this insert for our bulletin, I remind you that many of my ideas come from my notes made from what I have read, seen or heard. I do not claim creativity and originality. I do want to share my experiences from reading or even watching TV. From time to time I come across a page with notes about something, and I think -- that's it. That's a theme for my writing.

Do you recall how you learned why God made you? He did "to know, love Him and serve Him in this world and be happy with Him in eternal life." He wants you to know Him, not just know about Him. Just who is God?

Mankind has been seeking the answer to that question from time immemorial. The ancients got a great deal wrong in their search. There were idols galore, and the gods of the ancients were many and in the end found to be quite useless for a living humanity. Yet, the ancients did recognize that there was power outside themselves that could not be easily explained as coming from themselves. They saw the sun, the moon and the stars, and came to see in them a power over their lives. They began to speak in terms suited to human knowledge, will and experience. So they personalized these created things.

In time we have the record of the great thinkers, who loved wisdom. The philosophers in the age of the ancient Greeks and Romans used their human knowledge to search by reason for what had brought a world into existence. And most of all brought human beings to inhabit that world. They saw a spiritual force, outside the physical world of created things and persons. One cannot minimize the work of such as Plato, Aristotle and many more.

For us as we look into that earlier world, we come to know the work of those who saw that there really could be only one God. In medieval times the Scholastics took pains to refine how His existence could be proved. But by then, God Himself had already refined the revelation we hold so dear. The Old Testament had given us the knowledge of God that is on the right track. We learned to find Him from His creation. We learn His attributes from nature. We learn His powers from events. We find faith as itself powerful, and find in Abraham, Moses, the prophets many answers to our questioning. God truly reached out to mankind, to teach us of His justice and mercy, His love for his creation.

In time God did much more. We know the New Testament revelations, and find in them a security of faith, hope and charity. With it all there is that element of mystery, where the human mind cannot go any further. This is so, it seems to me, because God wants us to realize that we can only fully love Him as He wills us to do, when He embraces us in a life yet to be experienced.

Is there any value to what I have just written for our spiritual journey? Ask yourself how you know God. Is He well known about, but little actually known? That has always been my fear. There is so much more than an academic understanding of Him and all He means.

I read somewhere that growth in knowledge of God come from holiness. We must fall in love with God to truly appreciate who he is. Only then will we be ready to be united with Him in a fullness of wisdom, knowledge and understanding.

The Gospels keep teaching us about Jesus, the Son of God. He in turn teaches us about the Father, and reveals to us the Holy Spirit. Our experience of Jesus is and should be from our experience of creation, but most of our knowledge ultimately comes from the spiritual powers given us in the sacraments.

Baptism gives us a new and supernatural life, Confirmation brings it to a deeper maturity. Our confessions bring us into the mercy of this God. The Eucharist unites us to Him in Communion. In many small ways and many larger ones of our experiences we may find the Lord beside us. When we have happy days, He is there. When we have sadness and pain, He is there. Only He as the Holy Spirit makes our life an experience of grace. We come to know God (know about Him as well) as our Advocate, Paraclete, helper, giver of every good gift.

I ask myself do I try to keep learning more of who God is. At times, like everyone I find myself busy about many things. It is a happy time when I suddenly realize that God is found and known in the persons around me., He is there is the beauty of nature. He is found even in the moments of trial that others speak to me about.

How great our faith is in making life meaningful. Yet it is not enough. Our Holy Father has been speaking at his audiences about hope. We greatly need hope in our world of today. Our life becomes beautiful even in the midst of dangers to its true meaning. Let us hope and then hope again. After all, Jesus has promised us so very much.

Yet faith and hope need something more. It is love, charity, if you will. It is charity that makes the music come alive. It is love that brings us to know the mystery of life. We come to know that God IS love. That love is yours now today, is yours tomorrow. Embrace it and welcome a God who is everything we want Him to be. For the Christian God is known as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is one. He is Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. He is the one we are called to know, love and serve in this world and so find the happiness that will never end – if we remain true to Him in faith, hope and love.

*God love you always!
Monsignor Morrison*