



Reflection from Fr. Garry Richmeier

It's been many years since my Baltimore Catechism days, but some things just stay with a person. Like the catechism questions I had to memorize perfectly, OR ELSE! Everyone who had the same experience will know the answer to the catechism question "Where is God?" Of course the answer is "God is everywhere." If the meaning of this answer and question was explained at all back then, it usually had something to do with God being everywhere to see everything you do, so don't try to get away with anything.

Unfortunately, back then there was not a lot of encouragement in our church to delve deeper into this profound concept once people graduated from the catechism. What if we let the full impact of this idea affect how we look at things, and how we live? If we saw God in the land, water, air, and all of nature, we would reverence it and hold it as sacred, rather than destroy and pollute it, or treat it simply as a commodity. If we believed God was everywhere, present in pleasant and unpleasant events alike, we would be more at peace with the ups and downs of life, trusting that God's plan is constantly unfolding. If we believed God was in us, we would recognize our infinite value, and be more than willing to share our gifts with others. If we believed God is present in every human being, we would let nothing stand between ourselves and others. We would be able to love our enemies. We would not be able to stand seeing another person hungry, homeless, alone, or discriminated against.

If God is everywhere, then everywhere (everything, every person) is full of God's presence. In this light, our differences become variations on a theme (divine life), and we have less need to sort them into categories of right/wrong, good/bad.

We probably spend our entire lives learning the full meaning of that simple catechism question and answer. Since experience is the best teacher, I invite you to spend some time each day considering how God is present in some thing, person, event, etc. It can be something as simple as seeing the complexity of a leaf or the beauty of a flower. Or it could be thinking about how God was present in all the events in your life to get you to this point. The more we are aware of God's presence everywhere, the more we know we have nothing to worry about and nothing to fear.

~ Peace,

Fr. Garry