

The Gift of Presence



The greatest of all gifts given to creation by creator is Jesus Christ. Through Christ, not only was the world graced with an intimate insight into the relationship of God with Son; humanity also became enlightened to the understanding of the *one* God present within all. The multiplicity of creation gains the divine insight into the mind of God through the liturgy. Culminating the gifts of creation, the gifts of human hands, we acknowledge the gifts given to us, accept the gift, respond in liturgical action, and step forward to consume the ultimate gift of Eucharist. Through Jesus, God provides a way for us to gain concrete insight and experience of the Divine dwelling within us. We are temples of the Holy Spirit, and by literally consuming Jesus, it brings into reality this great mystery of presence.

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been ransomed at a price, therefore glorify God in your body.” 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

This question posed by Paul is simple and essential. In the light of our ministry with children, it lifts up the profound dignity of the child who is already in relationship with Divine. God knew you before you were formed in the womb, and thought you into existence. I know he loves you, because you are. Your material being was, is, and continues to form. And that life, the mysterious force, that energy at work within your matter continues to form you. God believes in you, therefor you are. God is, so may you be. I wonder, as the light of Christ spreads to all, how differently, how much more potently we could love each other. The hope for such a profound love we can all have for one another! Agape love.

The environment of the atrium is targeted to evoke, meet, and inspire the most essential needs of the child honoring their dignity and the divine presence at work within them. This profound respect for their relationship with God is fostered as the child grows; work with the maxims and the timelines of

sacred history help to orient the child to their time and place in history inspiring work on their blank page and fostering a yearning to participate intentionally in the care and growth of the Kingdom of God.

I find the posture of wondering together with the children at Liturgy and Scripture - especially the parables – a great joy. The exercise of asking questions and seeking answers, or simply finding peace in the “not knowing,” together with the children is liberating and inspiring on our life journey in relationship with Christ. I wonder at the movement of the Kingdom of God from less to more especially in the light of the Reformation and the various denominations of Christianity. Why all the division and rupture? Why is there a growing multiplicity of belief/worship among the people who profess to believe in the One Trinitarian God? Why is there not a movement from a multiplicity of belief to a single belief? Yet even in the Kingdom Parables, the mystery always moves from less to more. Through the experience of the atrium and my studies with MAPSCGS, I have transitioned into a space of peace and acceptance in not understanding all of God’s ways. I like to see the denominations not as a division but as growth into “more.” To grow and sustain life the earth evolves and changes, ruptures, multiplies and grows from less to more. Our understanding and faith in the one Trinitarian God mirrors this movement of growth and change and evolution from the less to the more. The fact that this work is translatable/universal across all cultures and languages and denominations speaks to the purity of relationship between God and humanity - our wholeness of being made up of many interchanging parts. God is present and at work within all, even those unaware of his presence. My role is to be present to the “all” who happen to be in front of me today, and share the gift of the “present.” To be the mustard seed, is to be open to be changed.

During a conversation in the atrium that originated around the maxim “You are a temple of the Holy Spirit,” an eight-year-old boy stated: “God goes in my mouth, and sits on the throne in my heart.” My prayer for you: May God dwell in the throne of your heart radiating love energy to and through you so you may be the seed: May you open to be changed, so you may be an instrument of change.

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