

How God shows Himself in you

In the foreword to the book, *'Night'*, by Elie Wiesel, François Mauriac writes of: 'On that most horrible day ... the child witnessed the hanging (yes!) of another child who, he tells us, had the face of a sad angel, he heard someone behind him groan: "For God's sake, *where is God?*" And from within me, I heard a voice answer: "*Where He is?* This is where – hanging here from this gallows.'" God was in the child!

People ask 'where is God' when they see unexplainable suffering, when they ask what am I here for, what is my purpose, what is the meaning of life, who am I really? People are looking for answers only God can give in things like money, sex, popularity, work, family, organisations, celebrities, etc. God is not there!

2 Cor. 5:19 says "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself". Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus is in us, reconciling the world to him. God shows Himself to unbelievers in you, me, and us.

Splendour - Baruch: "Jerusalem, take off your dress of sorrow and distress... God means to show your splendour" – Baruch tells the people of Israel that God is not angry, disappointed, or disgusted with them, but proud of them. Someone here may have done/not done something bad, have sinned. You may be stuck in sorrow and distress. God wants to "show your splendour." Don't hide your sins from God. Say sorry to God. Commit to become more like Jesus. We have a visiting priest coming specially to offer the sacrament of reconciliation on Sunday 22nd Dec 10am-12 noon. Catholics are encouraged to go to confession at least once a year. Receive God's forgiveness in the sacrament of reconciliation. God will "show your splendour".

Full of song - Psalm: Gods' people "go out full of tears, but come back full of song." Don't hide your tears. And don't let tears stop you worshipping. Your tears can be transformed through songs of praise and worship (eg 10,000 reasons). The parish Carol Concert on Sunday 15th 4-5 pm is an opportunity to praise God for Jesus' birth. Praise and worship to overcome tears and sadness.

Reaching perfection - Philippians: "you will reach ... perfect goodness." How many here ever feel like they will never "reach" the standards set by: family, work, teachers, spouse or partner, society, yourself, or God? In Romans, St Paul says "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Jesus is the only one who has *reached* perfect goodness. Don't *perform* for God's love. Don't *give up* sharing God's love either. Have faith in God's love for *you*. Through Jesus, God has reconciled, forgiven, saved, and loved you, just as you are, as a wounded sinner. Jesus makes you "reach perfect goodness."

Seeing salvation - Luke: St John the Baptist cried out "all mankind shall *see* the salvation of God." At alpha, one of the guests asked "God is personified (has a human image) as a father, Jesus is personified as a man; how is the Holy Spirit personified?" Through Jesus, through his word, through the sacraments, most especially the Eucharist, you and I are *filled* with Jesus' Holy Spirit. The human image of the Holy Spirit is *you* and *us*. All mankind shall see the salvation of God through YOU. Don't just reserve love to those you *like* or are *like you*. Show God's love to *all*. Through the Holy Spirit in you and us, "all mankind shall *see* the salvation of God."

Friends, God loves you. Through your faith in Jesus, He shows Himself in *you*! He takes away your confessed sins, and gives you **splendour**. He turns your tears to make you **full of song**. He enables you to **reach perfect goodness** through faith in His love. All will **see salvation** through the Holy Spirit in *you*.

When you go to work, your family, schools, out and about, God is showing Himself to *all*. When you've built enough trust, invite non-churchgoing friends and family to "come and see". Invite them to the Christmas carols and social on Sun 15th, and/or the Christmas Masses. These events are not just for ourselves. They are opportunities to show God's love to all who don't yet know Him.

Prayer

Lord, thank you that you show your glory in me and us.

I'm sorry for my sins. Take away my sorrow and distress. Show your splendour.

I offer you my tears from this week. Help me go back in to daily life full of song.

Thank you that I *can* reach perfect goodness through faith in Jesus.

Come, Holy Spirit and fill me. Help all mankind to see your salvation through my love for *all*.

In Jesus' name, amen!

