

## HOW DO WE MEET GOD?

The question, “How do you meet God?” can limit one’s spiritual growth. It can also define our relationship with God.

After more than 45 years, I found Percival, a classmate in the elementary, through the internet and agreed to meet him at Grand Central. When the agreed date and time arrived, I was at the Grand Central carefully looking at everyone passing by. After more than 45 minutes of waiting, I was about to leave, disappointed for not being able to see my classmate I knew 45 years ago. Suddenly I got a tap from my back. Turning around was a man who looks to be in his mid-sixties, introducing himself as Percival. I have seen him pass by me several times earlier but did not suspect he was the person I was waiting for. This happened because I was looking for the person I knew more than 45 years ago. But because his hair, face and voice have change due to time, I did not recognize him.

In our spiritual growth and our relationship with God, if we search for God instead of allowing God to look for us, we will miss God who could be right in front of us and who is so wanting to put His arms around us. If we are so focused in searching for a God we know, we miss the God we don’t know and have never met - missing the grace that is ours to have. If we only search for the God we have met at our ME’s, our teachings, class re-unions, our worship, and from people we are friendly with, and not from a parishioner we don’t know, a homeless, someone we are not comfortable being with, we could miss God himself.

In his book, “How big is your God? - The Freedom to Experience the Divine”, Fr. Paul Coutinho, SJ, says that the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius suggest that we should use all means to experience God and deepen our relationship with the Divine. He describes God as personal, a unique experience of the divine. He says that “the only way to meet God is through a kind of dying to self and letting God be God so that one can live the fullness of life.”

Dying to self is allowing God to find us and letting God be God, putting aside everything we know of God and simply expecting the unexpected. Doing this leads to living life to its fullness as God desires us to have – giving us everything He has.

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