

## **Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, May 13th 2017**

Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.

How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?

The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own.

The Father who dwells in me is doing his works.

Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me,

or else, believe because of the works themselves.

When I read today's Gospel the word that kept coming forward was "Believe." I tried to formulate a picture of what "Believe" looked like. What portrait would I paint for the word Believe? Immediately I think I would paint the beautiful sunrises and sunsets that I have seen while at the ocean; the times spent with my family and friends; my warm home; the lovely campus and place I call work; But these experiences do not alone create my belief in God.

How have I become friends with my God? How have I learned to lean on my God? How have I learned to trust my God? How do I know when I have had a Godly experience? So with some reflection here is how I grow my "Believe".....

Surround my senses with 'reminders' of my faith, my spirit, my values, my connections so I have an awareness at all times of the presence of God. My home is an apartment very simple but a place that is in order, with lots of reading materials the latest a reflective journal called The Intimate Nearness of God given to me as a gift at Easter. I am reading it in my early morning prayer; my office space is orderly with mantras on the wall, a Woman's prayer book on my desk, and a round table to meet with my colleagues and students. I spend 50% of my day at work and at home so these spaces are important to me.

Become comfortable talking about God. Talking about God for me is an intimate and sensitive experience. But talking about God with others validates our beliefs, increases our awareness of Godly events in our life, and strengthens our beliefs. Talking about God allows us to share our vulnerabilities with each other. Prayer groups, writing reflections, book clubs have all been important avenues for me to be more open and comfortable talking about God. This has increased my comfort level of talking about God to my friends and family.

Reach out to others and give. I have found service and volunteering to be one of my most powerful experiences and yet one that I am most inconsistent. So I try and be consistent in my giving in other ways. Any giving is so valuable. The world is a needy place and my time with others, my gifts to others brings me closer to God and increases my awareness of the presence of God in my life.

Spend quiet time to listen to God. Quiet time ....daily Examen, daily walks, participating in the Spiritual Exercises, sitting quietly enjoying the silence with a prayer or a mantra or music. I find a peace in all these activities that I believe is God's presence.

Surrounding my senses, talking about God, reaching out to others, and spending quiet time to listen to God have been powerful and has assisted me to grow in my relationship with God, my "Believe." As I spend time with my family, friends, meet with students, colleagues, have meetings, make decisions, grade papers, work on documents; Do what I do....I do it better because I believe my God surrounds me with love and care.

Amen, amen, I say to you,

whoever believes in me will do the works that I do,

and will do greater ones than these,

because I am going to the Father.

And whatever you ask in my name, I will do,

so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If you ask anything of me in my name, I will do.

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