

Commentary on the Gospel for Mon, Feb 11th 2013

I was not sure at first why I was drawn to those words, but as I have learned from the exposure I have had to St. Ignatius Loyola's (and others') spiritual advice, I lingered on those four words to see where the Spirit might direct me.

"In the beginning, God . . ." What a beautiful way to commence the Word of God and inaugurate the seeds of many faith traditions.

I found it interesting to think about how the writer (or even a later editor) had no idea of the magnitude of human history that would follow that stage-setting opening.

The writer did not know that there would be a New Testament. The writer did not know that the Creator of the universe he wrote about would enter the human race fully, being born of a woman and then living, loving, dying and rising from the dead—forever changing life and death on the planet Earth.

The writer could not have envisioned the printing press and that in the year 2013, I would have in front of me a 1,700-page book called the Bible. Nor that you would be reading about those four words on a device called a computer.

Thinking along those lines leads me to the grace-filled reminder that we don't—and don't have to—know everything. In fact, we know very little of where our actions, our words, our faith will lead. But we should exercise them anyway, doing our best to listen to God's promptings, the Spirit's whispers. There is a plan. We need to cooperate with it.

"In the beginning, God . . ." The other grace I received from reflecting on these words was that the fourth word was "God," not "humans" or "humankind." This is God's story. It is God's wisdom, God's mind. Humans are key to the story, for sure, but we are not the primary actors. We are

creatures. We are receivers of God's love. But in the beginning, there was only God. And God moved and acted and created. Just as his Spirit has throughout the Bible, throughout history, and will forever more.

I find that comforting. It leads me to want to know this God, to align with this God. Even more amazing, I find that this God is knowable and seeks friendship with his creatures. Could there be a more wonderful reality than that?

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