

## The Inborn Hunger for God

27

The human heart is filled with longing.  
No matter who we are or where we live,  
no matter how rich or poor we've become,  
no matter to whom we're married,  
or not married at all,  
no matter what,  
we hunger.

And for what do we hunger?  
When we pause to consider this,  
in its magnitude and power,  
we realize that we hunger  
for that One who made us.

We hunger for the divine heart.  
We hunger for God.

This desire for God is written into our very hearts,  
because we're created by God and for God.  
God never ceases to draw us to God's own self.

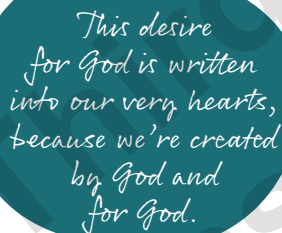
Only in God will we ever find  
the truth and happiness  
for which we never stop searching.

Our dignity as humans rests above all  
on the fact that we are called  
to this communion with God.

This invitation to be near God,  
to talk with God,  
to hear God's voice echo in our own souls,  
is addressed to us  
from the first moment of being.

The truth is that we believe something very profound  
about human life.

We believe that we exist because human life



*This desire  
for God is written  
into our very hearts,  
because we're created  
by God and  
for God.*

is an expression of divine love.  
Likewise, only through God's love  
do we continue in being.

We believe that we must acknowledge God,  
acknowledge God's love,  
and give our very hearts over to God  
for us to achieve happiness  
and fullness of life.

But how does this desire to be near to God  
play out in everyday life?  
How do we know that it is, in fact,  
a desire for God  
and not for something or someone else?

28

In many ways throughout history  
we have expressed our desires  
in words and actions.  
We have sought quiet moments of prayer.  
We have engaged in forms of sacrifice.  
We have developed rituals and liturgies.  
We have found ways to express  
our inner being  
by reaching beyond ourselves  
to "another being."

We give that "other being" a name,  
and that name is  
Holy One  
Spirit Counselor  
Wonder of Wonders  
Father of All  
Great Spirit  
Mother of the Earth  
or, in a word, God.

Looking even casually at history  
and how we have behaved,  
it is easy to see that we are "religious beings."



And even though we have searched continually  
for God down through the centuries  
and even in our present day,  
God, it turns out,  
is really quite near to us.

For in God, as the Acts of the Apostles reminds us,  
“we live and move and have our being.”

29 Even though God is so near to us  
and we to God,  
we sometimes forget this key to love.  
We may focus on the riches of this world,  
or allow indifference to overtake us,  
or remain ignorant about our deep desires,  
or follow a bad example,  
or ignore God’s invitation,  
or even outright reject God.  
Perhaps most insidious of all,  
we may even try to hide from God  
in fear and shame.



30 God, however, does not abandon us,  
or reject us,  
or shift the divine focus of attention.  
God is always near:  
always.  
God calls us to seek the sacred heart,  
to find life and happiness.  
And on our part, our human part,  
what is required of us?  
Simply that we respond to God,  
that we allow ourselves to be loved,  
that we place ourselves in such a place  
that we can hear the voice  
of the Holy One  
which echoes constantly  
in our depths.

For those who do seek God  
with a pure heart and deep desire,  
there are specific ways of coming to know  
the Divine Source of Life.  
There are ways of approaching God,  
of *seeing* God.  
These make us confident of God's existence.  
We can't prove that God is there  
in the same way  
we can prove something in science.  
But we can see with the inner eye,  
hear with the inner hear,  
and touch God in our own hearts.  
And in this, we can be sure:  
God is always near.

### GROUP OR PERSONAL PROCESS

---

*How do you sense that you are on a "journey of faith"?*

*How have you experienced intimate closeness with God?*

*How do you experience God's nearness?*

*Briefly share the story of your faith journey, beginning with your birth and ending with the present situation of your life. Share about the people who introduced you to faith, taught you, were models of faith, and stood by you during significant turning points that have occurred through the years.*