

ing in place

Usual-
rdinary
God acting in the world, in our
life."
At the same time, Father Young
knows that life is no "Polyanna
existence." Many people find life
"grinding, wearing, difficult,"
even when they realize they are
doing badly needed work, he
says.
He recalls being in Boston when
Dorothy Day explained how she
avoided personal burnout in her
work for the poor. She was accep-
ting the Father Isaac Hecker
award for her many decades of
social service.
Father Young recalls that Miss
Day told how, when respon-
sibilities threatened to overwhelm
her, she would go to New York
City's Nativity Church where
Father Hecker, the founder of the

Paulist religious order, once
prayed. Often she would think
about Father Hecker and especial-
ly a vision of angels he had,
Father Young said.

Angels were the last thing the
social-justice audience in the
church that day had come to hear
about, Father Young said. But
Miss Day explained why that vi-
sion helped her. It pointed to a
"transcendent dimension to life."
It helped her see "beyond squalor
and suffering."

Miss Day's point, as Father
Young interprets it, was that faith
"allows us to see beyond present
pain and gives meaning to pain."

He recalled celebrating Mass
recently with a family and some
of their friends. The small group
focused on and prayed for a
woman suffering from a serious
illness. The woman, who was pre-
sent, was recovering after major
surgery. The experience proved to
be wonderfully supportive for
everyone, he concluded.

Liturgy reminds Christians that
they can find God in each other,
said Father Young. It reminds
them that they are on a common
journey and can nourish each
other.

*(Ms. Bird is associate editor of
Faith Today.)*

or human beings takes place in
ents and intelligence and spirituali-
th other people. This brings us

for the world

The answer is obvious. There is
only one world for him to love: It
is the world in which we live, the
world on pilgrimage to the
kingdom.
Put simply, there really is no
sharp distinction between secular
and sacred — not in God's world.
All creation is permeated by God's

To the Jewish mind in the time of
Jesus there were only people —
people who did not "have"
bodies, but "were" bodies.

Jesus ministered to these living,
breathing, laughing, crying, danc-
ing, hurting people. He cured the
sick, gave sight to the blind, fed
the hungry, consoled those who
mourned, healed the crippled,
raised the dead, restored dignity
to the exploited.

He taught them how to find
happiness here and now by living
in accord with the designs of a
loving Father. He taught them to
seek happiness by being reconcil-
ed to this Father and to each
other.

"Surely (the Lord) did not come
to help angels, but rather the
children of Abraham; therefore he
had to become like his brothers
(and sisters) in every way...Since
he was himself tested through
what he suffered, he is able to
help those who are tempted"
(Hebrews 2:16-18).

*(Father Castelot teaches at St.
John's Seminary, Plymouth, Mich.)*

Solomon and Isaiah felt that in
selves to human concerns they
themselves to divine concerns as

presence, power and saving love.
Christianity, by its very nature,
is interested in the world and the
life of human beings. For God
created humanity in "the divine
image" (Genesis 1:27). God loved
humanity, redeemed it, destined it
for glory.
Reflect for a moment on the
career of Jesus. He did not go
around saving disembodied spirits.

FOOD...

...for thought

Think back to the last time
you felt genuinely frustrated.

—Maybe you had an argument
with someone at work or in
your family — a misunderstanding;
afterward you realized that
if either party had understood
the other, the argument would
not have occurred.

—Or maybe you felt frustrated
when you saw the impact of real
injustice on people's lives.

Now think back to the last
time you experienced a sense of
disappointment.

—Was it when a child you
care about was trying for a place
in your community's summer
All-Stars Swim Meet? She placed
13th in tryouts, but only the top
12 qualified.

—Or was it after you prepared
a fine dinner for close friends,
only to find at the last minute
that they had been struck by the
flu and couldn't come? Once
again you realized that well-made
plans can come apart at the
seams.

Frustrations. Disappointments.
In one degree or another, they
are among the stuff of daily life.
Can people be expected to
believe they can encounter God,
or learn about life's meaning, in
the midst of such uninvited
events?

Of course, frustration and
disappointment do not tell the
whole story of daily life. In daily

life you get to witness the per-
sonal growth that has occurred
in others or in yourself. Daily
life is a forum where something
unexpected may yield a solution
to a complicated problem. And
daily life offers opportunities to
express love and to share talents.

Daily life, it seems, is a mixed
bag. So what does it really mean
to speak of God's presence
there?

Think about it. Talk it over.

It is easy to think that God
cannot be encountered in the
messiness of daily life — or that
if God were encountered there, a
person would be too busy to
notice.

Thus, it pays to step back from
the rush of events in order to
ponder what is happening in
your life. God surely can be en-
countered during the quiet
moments when you take stock of
things.

But isn't it also possible to en-
counter God when the frustra-
tions and disappointments of dai-
ly life tear at you? Often they
force you to give attention to
something or someone that
means much to you. They push
you to come to terms with why
you care so much and how
much you care.

How is God present in daily
life?

What do you think?

...for discussion

1. You often will encounter
God through other people, it has
been suggested. Can you think of
a time when this happened to
you? Can you think of a time
when it happened for someone
you know, or for a character in
a book you read or a film you
saw?

2. Do you feel there is a con-
flict between the time given to
your work in the world and the
time that ought to be given to
God? Why, or why not?

3. How might your family life
or career responsibilities cast
light on God's meaning for you?

4. Trappist Father Basil Penn-
ington provides some guidelines
on making space in one's life for
the Holy Spirit. Do you find his
suggestions helpful?

SECOND HELPINGS

"O Holy Mountain!" by Father
M. Basil Pennington, OCSO.
This is a journal of Father Pen-
nington's seven-month retreat
at Mount Athos, the historic Or-
thodox monastic community in
Greece and "the only monastic
republic existing in the world to-
day." Why would a Trappist
priest need to go on retreat at
all? In this book the author ex-
plains why. At Mount Athos, the
author says, he was "purpose-
ly stepping back or out of his
usual world vision and concern
and centering upon his own per-
sonal being before his God." Readers will find in this book not
only an account of steps taken
during one man's special
spiritual journey, but many in-
teresting stories about the peo-
ple, the places and the history
of Mount Athos. (Michael
Glazier Inc. 1723 Delaware
Ave., Wilmington, Del. 19806.
\$7.95.)