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Spirituality

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Spiritan Spir

Anthony Gittins CSSp

Spiritan spirituality is something that all Spiritans are invited to live and share. But it is not a legacy that only Spiritans enjoy.

We embody it when we are fervent in the Spirit; when we evangelize the “poor”; when we bear witness to the gospel of justice, peace and reconciliation; when we renew our focus on education as a way to the integral liberation of individuals.

It evolves and is shaped by our life-experience.

Our commitment to God’s mission implies a calling and a sending to many persons, places and circumstances.

We try to follow the way of Jesus according to our circumstances and limitations.

There is no “one size fits all” spirituality. It is our experience of the life of God’s Spirit interacting with our lives.

We are not, cannot be, nor need we be angels. If it was good enough for God to become human, it should surely be good enough for humans to try to be the same.

I suggest a simple, practical and descriptive definition of “spirituality”: *“a way of being in the world with God.”*

“A way”: we are always somewhere in particular and we remain a particular someone. Therefore, our Christian spirituality will flourish or atrophy relative to the way we proceed at any given moment.

“Of being”: a single lifetime may embrace many ways of being: some people are healthy, others sick; some rich, some poor; alternately rich and poor, healthy and sick.

The New Testament abounds with examples of widely different ways of being: a bent-over woman, a despised tax collector, a woman pleading for her daughter, a synagogue leader pleading for his servant.

“In the world”: There are many “worlds” on this earth. Different people live “worlds apart”. Diversity shapes us.

“With God”: God is beyond all imagining — there is no single image for God: warrior, shepherd, king, lord, judge, child, lamb, and so on.

We discover God in creation — a grain of sand, a wild flower (William Blake), God is The Hound of Heaven (Francis Thompson), invisible yet viewable, intangible yet in touch, the grandeur of God.

We can never adequately define God, yet God remains the defining component of Christian spirituality. ■

Excerpt reprinted from *Spiritan Horizons*.

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Maasai prayer

Creator God, we announce your goodness because it is clearly visible in the heavens where there is the light of the sun, the heat of the sun, and the light of night. There are rain clouds. The land itself shows your goodness, because it can be seen in the trees and their shade. It is clearly seen in the water and the grass, in the milking cows and in the cows that give us meat. Your love is visible all the time: morning and daytime, evening and night. Your love is great. We say, "Thank you, our God!"