

I BELIEVE IN GOD

*O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder,
Consider all the works thy hand has made,
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed,
Then sings my soul my saviour God to thee,
How great thou art.*

I have lived quite a lengthy life and a happy one but I feel that, perhaps, for much of it I have taken my faith for granted. Four months after my thirteenth birthday, my father was killed in a fatal accident. That event changed and has affected my whole life. I was very close to my dad, he was my hero, and I have never doubted that he was in Heaven watching over me. In my twenties, I was married and our children were born and I thought deeply about how much my faith meant to me. I felt that I had a duty to pass on to them the faith that my parents passed on to me. I determined to be a faithful and loving husband to my wife and as good an example to my children as I could be. In my earlier years I worked hard and often long hours to provide a happy safe and comfortable home for my family. Although I remained faithful to the mass and to the sacraments, I think that my focus was on family and my job rather than my religion.

In my late thirties and early forties, I went through a phase of reassessment. It was not a midlife crisis, more a reappraisal of what was important. I realised how blessed I was having a lovely wife, a happy marriage, three wonderful children and comfortable home. I wanted to give something back to God for all his gifts to us. I became more active in parish affairs. I discovered a gift I previously did not realise I had and I became a regular reader at mass. Soon I was asked to join a group of catechists preparing children for confirmation and later I was invited to train as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. In the following years I experienced moments of overwhelming joy, moments when I felt so full of love my heart could not contain it and was overflowing.

As I approached retiring age, I began suffering in some small way what St. John of the cross called "The dark night of the soul" when I had doubts and felt that God was impossible and even tried to not believe. My head asked how could there be a being that could create such a vast universe while my heart would not allow me to dwell on these thoughts. I confessed my fears to a priest and he helped me to realise that I was not losing my faith but beginning to understand and appreciate the greatness and wonder of God. I began to read and learn more about my faith and I am very grateful to the Catholic Truth Society. I can understand why people find it hard to believe in God but to me now it seems more logical to believe in an almighty and eternal being than to believe that the Universe began with a big bang where before there was nothing. I think that once we accept God as being the supreme creator of all that is and realise that He is a merciful and loving father, then the incarnation, the virgin birth, the death, and the resurrection of Christ makes sense.

I am now in my final years and I have discovered another gift that God has blessed me with. I found that I could write down my thoughts in an intelligible way that others can read easily and seem to appreciate. Fr. Ravi encouraged me to start writing my reflections and he published them on the parish newsletter. I no longer take my faith for granted and I thank God that I am now able to recognise the signs that He is present in my life. I pray that I will always be faithful to Him.

I believe in God The Father and The Son and The Holy Spirit, As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.