

JESUS IN
YOU

The Indwelling
of the Trinity
in the Souls
of the Just

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To my daughter,

*Sister Maria,
Servant of Abba Father,
Who Lives the Divine Indwelling*

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CHAPTER 1

WHAT DIFFERENCE WOULD IT MAKE?

This little work will take a brief look at two basic questions that deeply affect the lives and actions of every single person on the face of the earth.

The first: *Is God inside every human being?* Regardless of differences in race, culture, or even religious beliefs, can a case be made that God, in some real way, exists in every living, breathing human person?

The second question: *Does the Trinity dwell within some human beings?* Now, the Trinity is a specifically Christian belief, that in the one God there are three distinct Divine Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (as we'll discuss). But that's not the main point of our discussion. It goes further than that—it goes to the issue of *you*. This journey of the mind is to look further down the human road and examine the personal question: does this Trinity of Persons—assuming, for the moment, that the Trinity is real—actually dwell or “live in” certain individuals who welcome Them into their hearts?

What difference would it make?

Depending on your answer to these two questions, it makes a world of difference. In fact, it can make all the difference, and even “another world” of difference.

What difference does it make if there is a diamond in the jewelry box? It makes a big difference.

What difference does it make if there's a pearl in the oyster? A big difference.

What difference does it make if there is treasure in the treasure chest? Big difference.

What difference does it make if there is a king in the castle? Ditto.

Does that mean there's no value to the jewelry box, to the oyster, to the treasure chest, or to the castle without what's found inside?

Absolutely not! These containers are all valuable, and can be exquisitely formed and beautifully decorated entities in themselves.

But I think we'd all agree the addition of the diamond, the pearl, the treasure, and the king add an exponential value, a massively multiplied worth, to the noble containers that contain these things inside themselves.

That's why it's so important that every human being, as sacred and dignified in himself, be honest and courageous enough to ask the life changing question: *What's inside of me?*

If the answer might be “God” or, even more amazingly, “the three Divine Persons of the Trinity,” then that could make *an eternal difference*.

So we’re going to look at these two questions about the possible indwelling of God in general, and the Trinity in particular. We will do so from the diverse perspectives of basic philosophy, history, and religion. You, of course, are free to draw your own conclusions from this journey of the mind concerning the human soul and what might dwell “within.”

We begin our quest with some common sense truths about ourselves and the reality in which we live. Then, I will offer for your consideration ideas that I believe are also true from a religious point of view concerning what is and what could be inside every human being.

As a professor of theology (the study of God) for over a quarter of a century, I can assure you that I will not present to you during our journey together anything that would be considered offensive or erroneous from a basic Christian point of view.

Now, let’s begin the road inside. I think you’ll be pleased with what you’ll find, or in some cases, *discover anew*.

CHAPTER 2

“GOD INSIDE YOU?”

Let's start with the words of two very different women. These two women are from different sides of the globe, and with almost opposite life circumstances. Yet both women found the ultimate remedy for their lives in the subject of this little book.

Immaculee Ilibagiza was, at that time, a 24-year-old Rwandan woman who found herself in the middle of one of the greatest human genocide tragedies in recent history. Home from college to spend Easter with her Catholic family, Immaculee had to flee her home when the assassination of Rwanda's Hutu president sparked a three month slaughter of more than one million ethnic Tutsi tribe members. The young Tutsi woman survived by spending ninety-one terrifying days of untold suffering, hiding in a Hutu pastor's small bathroom cramped up with seven other starving women.

What possibly could have kept Immaculee (now world famous for her forgiveness of those who sought her life and ended the lives of most of her family members) from losing her peace, let alone her mind, under such horrific conditions? She tells us:

I found a place in the bathroom to call my own: a small corner of my heart. I retreated there as soon as I awoke, and stayed there until I slept. It was my sacred garden, where I spoke with God, meditated on His words, and nurtured my spiritual self.

When I meditated, I touched the source of my faith and strengthened the core of my soul. While horror swirled around me, I found refuge in a world that became more welcoming and wonderful with each visit. Even as my body shriveled, my soul was nourished through my deepening relationship with God.

I entered my special place through prayer; once inside, I prayed non-stop, using my rosary as my anchor to focus my thoughts and energies on God. The rosary beads helped me concentrate on the gospels and keep the words of God alive in my mind. I prayed in silence, but always mouthed the words to convince myself that I was actually saying them.... I spent hours contemplating the meaning of a single word, such as *forgiveness*, *faith*, or *hope*. I spent days with the word *surrender*, and I came to understand what it meant to *surrender* my life to a Higher Power. I gave myself over completely to God. When I wasn't praying, I felt I was no longer living in His light, and the world of the bathroom was too bleak to endure.¹

¹ Immaculee Ilibagiza, *Left To Tell*, Hay House Publishing, 2009, p. 95.

This contemporary female hero of Christian forgiveness survived this unimaginable terror by praying and experiencing *God within her own heart*.

Now let’s look at the insights of another twenty-four-year-old woman. This woman was a French contemplative religious sister from a cloistered Carmelite convent, who, at the time, was just two years away from her untimely death at age twenty-six. Her name was Sister (now Blessed) Elizabeth of the Trinity.

Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity found her fulfillment as a contemplative nun in the same place that Immaculee did, in the tabernacle of her soul.

It seems to me that I have found heaven on earth, since heaven is God and God is in my soul. The day I understood that, everything became clear and I wish I could whisper this secret to those I love in order that they may also cling closely to God through everything..²

Now, if both a Rwandan refugee and a French Carmelite nun could say that their saving remedy for peace of heart was their experience of God within their souls, this means that *anyone from any vocation or state of life could experience the same reality*.

We live in a time with much confusion, plenty of wild ideas, and few distinctions. So let’s make some (distinctions, that is—not confusion or wild ideas).

² M. Philipon, *Spiritual Doctrine of Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity*, Maryland, 1955, p. 56.