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Finding God in Everything

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Pandikattu, Kuruvilla. *Finding God in Everything: Spiritual Insights to Finding Everything in God*. New Delhi, ISPCK.

Who are we? How can we relate to others and thereby realise ourselves? What is the meaning of my life? Where do we find God? How do we relate to Him? How does genuine spirituality enable me to become truly human, joyous and authentic?

These are some of the issues this book on contemporary, creative spirituality takes up. This book invites us to find God in everything. More, it invites us to find everything in God. It deals primarily with life as lived out in our daily lives in our interaction with things and God. Then it tries to draw spiritual insight from the events of daily life, so that we can live up our own lives, to embrace the world, fellow-human beings and God. The approach of this book is an inclusive and dialogical one, where we try to discern the divine in every aspect of earthly life.

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Each article in this book begins with a concrete experience, person, book or experiment. From that, we go to explore the larger dimensions of life and study the deeper values inherent in it. So, we move from the material to the spiritual, from the mundane to the perfect, without in any way sacrificing the material or the mundane.

Encountering fellow human beings, the world and the whole of reality face to face. The next part describes the role of stories in healing, liberating and making our lives genuinely humane.

The author believes that our spirituality emerges from the earthly, without in any way giving up the other-worldly. He holds that true joy and happiness comes from the simple pleasures of life. He hopes that our fulfilment as human beings starts from our concrete experiences of joy, sadness, relationships and love.

In the First Part of this book, he traces ways and means of reaching happiness and healing. He wants to show that our friends, relationships, memories and forgiving the harm others have done to us will enhance our well-being and bliss. The next Part talks of the spiritual dimensions of our day-to-day life, which allows us to experience genuine joy. Meditations, mindfulness and other means of spiritual experiences are treated.

The Third Part invites us to foster creativity through art, silence and music, which form part of the melodies of our lives. Here we realise that our spiritual life has been rooted in the earthly and bodily aspects of our lives. This takes us to the next Part, dealing with the spiritual practices leading to joy and optimism.

The abandonment that is critical to any spiritual life takes us to the next Part, nurturing the aesthetic dimension of our lives. Art,

dance, curiosity as well as reading and writing can make our life more authentic and empathetic. The Sixth Part helps us to explore some of the deepest human values and try to make the best of the encounters that we human beings are capable of: encountering fellow human beings, the world and the whole of reality face to face. The next part describes the role of stories in healing, liberating and making our lives genuinely humane.

Part Eight talks about our responsibility to society and the need to pay attention to the joys and sorrows of the larger political, scientific and social dimension of our collective reality. The next part deals with our responsibility to make this world a better one, recognising the larger (and at times, uncomfortable) truths of our social life.

The final Part talks about meaning and integrity within myself and in the larger world and cosmos we live in. It talks about the human need to be true to one's own self and to lead a modest and human life so that we can truly feel at home with ourselves.

Thus, the author shows through this book that the God we seek (or conversely and even better, the God who seeks us continuously) is to be found in everyone and everything. He is present everywhere and traces of Him can be found in all things at all times if we are attentive enough. That loving God always present to us. From this experience, everything and everyone gets a different value. Then everyone has to be seen in God and everything has to be experienced in the Divine. So, we are called to find Everyone and Everything in God. That is grace! Unconditional love and unqualified mercy.

This book argues that the spiritual can be traced in all activities, earthly, mundane and secular. It assumes that we can only reach the spiritual in and through the secular, the ordinary experiences of normal human beings. All in all, this is a modest attempt to reflect on our contemporary lives and see the glimpse or traces of the Divine in our lives. It is an invitation to discern God's presence in everything and everyone. It is a simple effort "to see God in everything." And further "to find everything in God" as St. Ignatius of Loyola would put it.

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In the foreword to this book Prof Stephane Baik, President of the Society of the Korean Society of Theology and Thought, Seoul, South Korea, congratulates "Professor Pandikattu for bringing out this book, I wish that the readers will gain deep spiritual insights, which are truly rooted in the Christian experience of God's unconditional love for each one of us."

This book is recommended to all those who seek to enliven their spirituality by discerning God in the ordinary things of life. A must for all religious houses and spiritual centres.

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