

In his Angelus address on Sunday, August 11, Pope Francis spoke of the desire, whether he or she knows it or not, of every person to meet the Lord. It is a desire, he says, that “keeps us ever ready...for we anticipate this encounter with all our heart.” We are drawn to God’s love, to know it and live it, like nothing else. As we enter the beginning of a new school year here at CUA, we can ponder this desire in our heart. Pope Francis simply asks if “We all have a desiring heart?” Or do we have “a closed heart, a sleeping heart, a heart numb to the things of life?” Asking these questions makes us think about where we are in our relationship with the Lord and with each other. It makes us think about what guides us each day. No matter what we figure are answers to these questions, God has spoken and touched each of us here, perhaps much more than we really know. Somehow we have all been brought together to be Knights and to share and grow our faith. With the desire to know God’s love, each of us can grow in our personal relationship with the Lord. Our council can grow together too. However, “We must always be open to the gift of the Spirit”, as said by Cardinal Wuerl at the Mass of the Holy Spirit this week.

A challenge then this year is to journey through each day with our desire to follow God at the forefront. To continually seek and be reminded of God’s love is made ever harder because there is a barrage of things which occupy our thoughts and actions. We can easily be immersed in our everyday life. We attend meetings and school events every day. We study, write papers and do projects. We watch movies and we go out on the weekend, and then find time to sleep. It is not that God’s presence and love can’t be found in these happenings; indeed it can be. But we may overlook God’s presence and love because we don’t connect our desire to encounter the Lord with such activities. By trying to connect it though, God can enlighten us with things we never would have thought, and letting us know He is closer than we thought. Discovering and/or remembering our desire to meet the Lord and to love as He would then is important because God is seeking us too. It is like being in a giant corn maze with God. A person in the corn maze who wants to find or meet God will go looking for Him. God is also seeking His beloved son or daughter in that maze. And somewhere they will eventually meet. But without the persons desire to enter the maze and seek God, one person can never fully encounter God.

As we grow in our relationship with God, we will see things in a different way because God is revealing things to us. We can be transformed in how we care for our neighbor. That we were all created in God’s image and likeness can have deeper meaning than before. All the students, teachers, workers, priests, and religious we see here have a relationship with the Lord. Whether they know it or not, the Lord deeply loves them and has been with each of them from the beginning, knowing intimately their desires, fears, joys, dreams and the like. We may see ourselves at the frontline of God’s work as an ambassador who helps others to discover for themselves the joy and comfort of a relationship with the Father. At the Mass, Cardinal Wuerl said it best. We will see that the “love of God works through us.”

And God’s love can change our everyday life and activities into something more than what we thought. Pope Francis pronounces that “it is precisely God’s love that gives meaning to our small daily tasks and helps us face the great trials.” He calls it “a love that gives value and beauty to everything else” even giving meaning to immoral and negative times. It is a love, as Pope Francis says, that is “always opening us to hope.” We may not know the way that God sees us through His eyes until we desire him with all our heart. For example, Leahy Hall at 3 AM in

finals week may leave us lost in the moment. While we feel exhausted and wish for it all to be over, drifting in and out of sleepiness in front of our computer, we may be unaware that God is indeed right next to us. We can find His love has the power to lift us up when we seem unable to. But His love is “not something vague, some generic feeling”, says Pope Francis in his Angelus address, that could come from time to time, for “God’s love has a name and a face, Jesus.”

Not just by ourselves do we seek God but with others. Pope Francis notes that the desire to meet the Lord is not merely by one’s self, but to meet the Lord with his/her companions. Together as a council, we grow closer to each other and to the Lord through what we do and say to each other. And in this council, all of us are witnesses of the faith. Each of us has his own experiences. The hope is that our witness can assist those who don’t believe in God to consider what Cardinal Wuerl posed in his homily, “What would the world be like without people like us?” As Proverbs 27:17 says, “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” But when we have a shared desire to encounter the Lord, we are unified. As specified in the Lenten Reflection earlier this year, “when we are unified with God, we are unified with each other” and then are we “most capable of doing God’s work.”

As the Knights of Columbus, we have received an honorable and most significant call to be examples and ambassadors of the Lord’s love, which is deeper than we really know. God has given us His trust. Collectively and individually we need to share this love in hopes that everyone may discover within their own hearts his or her desire to encounter the Lord.