

Exploring the Trace of God's Presence in Daily Life Between Faith and Reason

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Abstract: Reason and faith must be balanced in order to develop a relationship with God. Both complement one another, despite the fact that they are frequently seen as mutually exclusive. Through the experience of faith, humans despite their limited intelligence are able to recognize the existence of God. This process involves more than just thinking; it also involves the light of faith, which makes it possible to sense God's presence in day-to-day existence. The secret to developing a close relationship with God is having a high-quality spiritual life. The development of a spiritual quality of life can be achieved through adoration, meditation, and prayer. This article's research methodology, which employs the library method, presents opinions from a range of sources that are pertinent to the growth of a relationship with God. In conclusion, a balance between reason and faith is necessary for the pursuit and discovery of God. People can sense God's presence in their lives through the quality of their spiritual lives, their theological viewpoint, and their experience of faith in Christ.

Keywords: Divine, Faith, God, Human, Relationship

1. INTRODUCTION

A believer can admit that God is real and exists to help people. This suggests a connection between the immanent and the transcendent. Humans are limited creatures, but their faith allows them to sense God's presence and closeness. Having faith in God enables people to form life-saving relationships. As a result, believers must have religious experiences that show God's actual presence (Hujibers, 2019). When people are able to have a close relationship with God, they can sense His presence. When people pray, they will develop a close relationship with God. Humans can communicate directly with God through prayer (Nouwen, 1985). People can have a close relationship with God through prayer. However, in order to help someone experience unity with God, a strong faith is required. People can discover and get to know God better through the experience of faith in Him. In order to save humanity, people can experience faith by imitating Christ, the only Son of God (Dr. Nico Syukur Dister, 1991). God is genuinely reflected in Jesus, who took on human form. As a result, people are encouraged to believe in Christ, who is both fully God and fully human. In the end, faith in Christ is what unites people with God. Humans can experience love and a close relationship because of Christ. Nevertheless, God is still God, or, to put it another way, a divine mystery. "He dwells in unapproachable light; no one has ever seen Him or can see Him" (1 Timothy 6:16). Consequently, God continues to be a divine mystery even after He has revealed Himself (KWI, 1996). In this day and age, the mystery of God is frequently regarded as being incompatible with reason (Suanglangi, 2020). Rapid advancements in science and technology foster critical thinking, which

frequently runs counter to religious convictions. In actuality, faith and reason are not mutually exclusive. While reason, which God created, works to explore and comprehend things that can be rationally explained, faith includes things that are outside the realm of reason. In fact, reason's confrontation with the supernatural demonstrates that God's truth is beyond human comprehension (Natalia, 2023). The purpose of this article is to provide a theological perspective on the process of seeking and finding God in daily life.

2. LITERATUR REVIEW

General Overview of the Retreat

The Development of Retreats Over Time A retreat, according to Saint Ignatius of Loyola, is a spiritual practice. According to him, spiritual exercises include all methods of examining the heart, meditation, contemplation, vocal or mental prayer, and other spiritual pursuits. These are all ways to prepare the soul and provide the heart to free oneself from all disordered attachments, and then to seek and find God's will in real life for the salvation of our souls. The foundation of spiritual exercises is spiritual activity. According to Saint Ignatius, other physical practices that can enhance spiritual activities include fasting, sensory control, and structuring daily life to meet the requirements of spiritual exercises. Since a retreat is a remarkable grace, it can also be more freely defined as a period of rest from studies and everyday responsibilities, as well as a period of earnest prayer. There are numerous other terms with more uplifting connotations, as the term "retreat" tends to be burdensome. The phrase "vacation with the Lord" was coined by Thomas Green. Taking a vacation with the Lord entails making the most of our free time to rejoice with him; similarly, we abandon our daily routines when we go on vacation. After that, we engage in enjoyable activities while momentarily ignoring the responsibilities and demands of our tasks.

These days, retreat activities are held for the development of families, particularly Christian families, in addition to prospective priests, seminarians, priests, and nuns. Today, the goal of Christian family retreats is to help family members—parents and their kids, including young adults, teens, and children (PIA) discover who they are and grow closer to God through the activities they do. Given the mix of personalities in a family, including the youthful and adolescent members who are attractive, active, and eager to try new things, as well as the parents' generally calmer personalities, a retreat method that includes activities that can encourage retreat participants to fully immerse themselves in the retreat with joy is necessary, as is a space that can support these retreat activities.

Comprehending Get away One of the spiritual practices used by a religion to strengthen and develop its adherents' faith is retreat. "Retreat means withdrawing, being alone, isolating oneself, distancing from daily busyness, leaving the crowded world." Many spiritual practices, including prayer, conscience examination, reflection, meditation, and meditation creation, are carried out in a methodical and structured manner during a retreat. There is a sense of relief in the quiet that one finds in a retreat. There are various ways to define retreat, including the definition provided by R.S. Sarto Pandoyo, SJ, the literal meaning, and the actual meaning.

R.S. Sarto Pandoyo claims that SJ An explanation of the retreat or spiritual exercises: · The dynamic development of God's love working in humans, where faith fills the heart, is what Spiritual Exercises (Retreat) are. They are not a renewal of theology, a "self-improvement" (plagiarism of shaping my self), opening a stiff and tightly locked cover, or a silent time for prayer. They are also not an attempt to keep myself up to date.

According to Peters, "the essence of Spiritual Exercises is that God works in and with the retreatant who wishes to know more deeply, enjoy, savor, and embody His truth before God." This means that spiritual exercises are an attempt to find one's identity in God's revelation. (Peters, SE, page 56) · The grace and interviews from the different meditations and contemplations in the Spiritual Exercises reflect the dynamic and ongoing development that occurs every week, specifically: According to the grace and interviews from the different meditations and contemplations in the Spiritual Exercises, each week is a dynamic development that keeps moving forward. These include:

- a. Offer up prayers for the things that come from the very core of our innermost selves.
- b. Discovering oneself by connecting with the innermost desires that God has given us
- c. Acquiring peace and the spontaneity of the Spirit by learning to allow God's love to discipline us. "Retreat" means "withdrawal," "seclusion," "solitude," and "distancing oneself from everyday life" in French. Retreat means to isolate oneself in a peaceful location in Indonesian.

Considering the meaning The English word retreat is where the word originates. A place for self-isolation is one definition of retreat in the English-Indonesian Dictionary, which was put together by Hassan Shadily and John M. Echols. Retreat is a verb that means to pull back. We host a retreat, which entails removing ourselves from the hectic world and retreating to a peaceful location to spend time alone. A retreat is referred to as "khalwat," which means removing oneself from the hectic world in order to find inner peace, according to the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language. Therefore, a place or movement

towards quiet or tranquillity is what the word "retreat" means. 14 Retreat offers a chance to escape the daily grind and learn how to develop a spiritual life, which helps us better understand God and others while also becoming more conscious of who we are.

Self-awareness in regard to our relationship with God and others serves as the cornerstone for our future life principles or guidelines. There may be strengthening, reaffirmation, admonition, refreshments, etc. during the retreat. With retreat guidance, Christian families can discover the true significance and goal of a retreat. According to what it truly means For us Christians, retreats are meant to help us develop spiritually. This spiritual exercise, called exercita, aims to rekindle and fortify Christian hope and love. In particular, the reviving and fortifying of that spiritual side to seek God's will, especially when making important decisions. The objective is to discover and respond to our life's purpose in this world. Usually, retreats involve withdrawing to a quiet place or isolating oneself. This method of seclusion is meant to help us think, reflect, and pray more efficiently. This kind of seclusion can help us think back on our life experiences. As we look back on our life's journey, we have to think about how it will unfold. Because we can identify with the reflections we make, we must specifically take into account all of our experiences. To continuously guide us in our life's reflections and point us in the direction of our future aspirations, prayer must be the cornerstone of all our thoughts and reflections.

A retreat is a great opportunity for us to evaluate ourselves specifically. We are able to discover God, ourselves, and others during this period. Being away from the crowds and in a calm environment will help us find inner peace. This inner tranquility helps us to appreciate our life's journey on a deeper level. This will be supported by items related to the retreat itself. Prayer, sharing, lectures, conversations, reflections, and so forth are a few examples.

The Purpose of the Retreat The process of a retreat that aims to change people's lives is frequently explained as follows: the retreat starts with things that are not good, deformata, and progresses towards improvement. The enlightenment and strength gained through prayer during the retreat then direct and transform things that have been improved, reformed, and transformed. 16 Spiritual activities like prayer, meditation, self-examination, and reflection are among the routine and methodical activities that take place during a retreat. As a chance to escape routine and everyday activities, retreats frequently assist people in finding silence, which is where relief and tranquility can be found. Finding one's true self can frequently be facilitated by guidance during a retreat. In addition to helping parents teach their children the meaning of life, which is typically hard to discover in daily

life, self-symbols are necessary for developing youth to discover who they are. According to the traditional perspective, the purpose of retreats is to meet God. Then, the question of whether God is absent from our everyday lives comes up. Is it possible to find God only in peaceful settings? We can discover God in our everyday lives through more somber experiences that only take place in silence. getting closer to God.

Thus, a retreat's main goal is to help participants recognize God's presence in everyday life so that they can comprehend the meaning of life. The retreatants also lead the retreat with the intention of achieving inner peace. We become aware of God's role in our lives when we are at peace with ourselves. During a retreat, we can explore past experiences or events that we now perceive to be highly beneficial to our personal expansion. In essence, a retreat is a means of reviving faith that is experiencing a crisis (desolation). Self-isolation is a characteristic of Christians as well as a human need to attain silence. This practice was inspired by Jesus' example of praying in the desert prior to His mission (cf. Matt 4:1-11). The apostles waited for the gift of the Holy Spirit for nine days while praying assiduously (cf. Acts 1:13-14). A new perspective on loneliness is provided by Jesus' example. Isolation is meant to help one become more intimately and profoundly aware of God's presence. You can find this in silence. Silence can allow us to have a deeper experience of God. The retreat process is similar to how we breathe. We inhale and exhale. During that respiration, we take in acidic substances and release harmful ones.

Retreat Based on Age

The Children's Retreat Children in kindergarten through elementary school are the target audience for children's retreats. The indoor activities are better suited to the personalities of kids who like to play.:

- a. One retreat guide and multiple children's guides typically oversee the retreat activities.
- b. Youth Retreat Youth retreats are designed for students ranging in age from junior high school to college. In addition to games as a way to reflect and find one's identity during the developmental stage of young people, who are susceptible to harmful influences, the activities within it include increased prayer and introspection. held with two to three retreat guides over a number of days
- c. Retreat for Adults A retreat designed specifically for adults of working age is known as an adult retreat. Adult men and women who are tired of work and in need of some peace from the work-related activities that take up their daily lives make up the group participating in this retreat. Adult retreats are typically dominated by meditation and

introspection. conducted over a number of days under the direction of one or two retreat facilitators

- d. A retreat for parents. Parents or those who already have a family are the target audience for this retreat. Meditation and introspection predominate the activities inside; personal peace is typically the goal of the retreat. The cases they encounter on a daily basis are typically used to determine the retreat materials. conducted with a mentor over a few days, 1-2 days

According to the Perpetrator, retreat

- a. Religious Organization This retreat is a retreat whose members are religious groups, such as candidates for priests, nuns, or brothers. The approach used is seen from: the experience of sinfulness, the experience of resurrection, and the experience of being loved.
- b. Group of Students This retreat is a retreat whose members are groups of students, elementary school, middle school, high school, and university students. Its activities are more suited to their personalities as growing learners. The approach used is usually viewed from a psychological perspective, namely: self-reflection on negative aspects, genuine intentions, and concretization. The material for contemplation in the retreat is reflected upon from the occurrence of bad things to the real conditions in their daily lives.
- c. Group of Production Members of both active and passive work groups are present at this retreat. Active in the sense of work that is heavy and field-related. Meanwhile, passive work is usually done indoors or in an office. The approach taken is the same as with the adolescent group, viewed from a psychological perspective.

The object being perceived in this research is God, therefore before explaining what the perception of God is, this section will first explain what perception is. According to Sobur (2019:445), perception in a narrow sense is vision, how someone sees something. Whereas in a broader sense, it is a view or understanding, that is, how someone perceives or interprets something. Perception is the process by which a person organizes and interprets patterns of stimuli in the environment (Atkinson, 2019:15). Perception is a process of using existing knowledge to detect or acquire and interpret stimuli received by sensory organs such as the eyes, ears, and nose. For example, when someone sees an image, reads a text, or listens to a specific sound, they will interpret it based on the knowledge they possess (Matlin, 1989; Solso, 1998 in Suharnan 2019:23). Sugihartono et al. (2019:8) stated that perception is the brain's ability to translate stimuli or the process of translating stimuli

that enter the human senses. Meanwhile, Walgito (2004:70) states that perception is a process of organizing and interpreting stimuli received by an organism or individual so that it becomes something meaningful. Furthermore, Walgito (2010:70) states that the consequences of perception can be taken by individuals in various forms.

Which stimulus will receive a response from the individual depends on the attention of the individual concerned. Based on this, because feelings, thinking abilities, and experiences possessed by individuals are not the same, the perception of a stimulus may differ from one individual to another. Jalaluddin (2019:51) states that perception is the observation of objects, events, or relationships obtained by inferring information and interpreting messages. Meanwhile, Suharman (2022:23) states that perception is a process of interpreting or interpreting information obtained through the human sensory system. According to him, there are three aspects of perception that are considered relevant to human cognition, namely sensory recording, pattern recognition, and attention. Based on several definitions of perception above, it can be concluded that perception is a process involving the cognitive and affective aspects of individuals to select, organize, and understand as well as interpret sensory stimuli through a complete image of a specific object, so that individuals become aware of and understand what is received by the sensory organs or receptors.

Understanding of God

The earth and everything on it, the heavens, and the creatures that live there were all created by God, an eternal and supernatural being. To clarify the idea of God, specifically: a. The idea of God as perceived by experts According to Syeikh Siti Jenar (in Kandito, 2022:69–70), God is the Being who simultaneously encloses the material and spiritual realms; therefore, humans and other creatures that He created are unable to perceive God's essence. Only things with a material form which are extremely few can be perceived by the human senses.

Therefore, the senses are unable to perceive the essence of God, which also includes the realm of the soul and the realm of essence. The true nature of God cannot be revealed by the understanding of God. The aforementioned explanation of Syeikh Siti Jenar's conception of God leads one to the conclusion that God cannot be essentially described since the essence and true nature of God cannot ever be revealed by human comprehension or language. Nasr (in Hunafa, 2020:43–64) asserts that since God is the Most Holy Being, one must be pure in order to approach Him. In order to prepare for their meeting with the Most Holy Being, Sufis make an effort to purify themselves.

3. METHOD

In order to develop a relationship with the Divine, the author of this article employs a bibliographic approach that looks at theological reflection. Through books, journals, and scientific studies on the relationship with God, the author gathers pertinent sources from this time period. The author then goes on to illustrate the significance of the theological reflections on developing a relationship with God by supplementing and deepening them with library techniques (Fadli, 2021).

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Thomas Aquinas' Theory of Man and God

Humans are creatures created in God's image. This demonstrates that people are able to comprehend God. It should be noted, nevertheless, that human beings are still limited in their capacity to fully comprehend and know God. Philosopher and theologian Thomas provided an explanation of *theologia naturalis*. Thomas goes on to teach that although the knowledge of God that people can acquire through reason is ambiguous and not salvific, they can still know God with the aid of reason. Once people use their intellect to ask questions about the world and themselves, they can come to know God. Therefore, Thomas contends that the only way for people to know God is for them to have some philosophical understanding of him. According to Thomas, "*credere est cum assensione cogitare*" (which translates to "believing is a way of thinking while agreeing with it" in Indonesian) indicates that believing is not a blind act (Dewanta, 2016). Thomas's theory invites people to think critically about their lives. Through introspection, people are encouraged to consider and apply their faith to delve deeply into situations that may lead to personal spiritual experiences. People can discover God's presence in their lives through spiritual experiences.

Enhancing the Spiritual Life's Quality It takes spiritual maturity to build a relationship with God. One will feel a sense of oneness with the Divine as they grow spiritually. According to Catholic doctrine, prayer is a crucial part of growing spiritually. Praying is a method, a way to communicate deeply with God. There are various ways to pray, and meditation is one of them. It is a useful tool for spiritual development. One is encouraged to join together in silence through meditation in order to hear God's voice (Damianus et al., 2020). The worship of the Blessed Sacrament, or adoration, comes next. In order to develop a close relationship with God as a believer, adoration invites one to kneel before the Blessed Sacrament and explore God in life. (Rindi Ilmiawati, 2022). Until

someone can at last live out their belief in God, who has the power to save their life. When someone has attained the spiritual maturity they have strived for, they reach that awareness. Because without fighting for it, faith itself cannot flourish. Therefore, a person can find God in their life and experience their faith in God after reaching spiritual maturity. They can also continue to be faithful in carrying out God's will and plan in their lives. When considering the aforementioned viewpoint, it is evident that, in comparison to all other animals, humans are fundamentally noble. However, because of their inherent flaws, people still struggle to find God in their day-to-day existence. Because people frequently seek out material pleasures that eventually cause them to lose their faith and fail to recognize and sense God's presence in their lives. Humans must therefore be able to demonstrate through their actions or attitudes that they are making an effort to get closer to God throughout their life's journey.

Engaging in the ongoing process of reaching a certain level of spiritual maturity, which allows people to have an increasingly intimate relationship with God, is one of the behaviors or attitudes to build a relationship with God. People are encouraged to prioritize acts that demonstrate that every believer in God should constantly pray and consider everything that occurs in their lives because Building a Relationship with the Divine: The Process of Seeking and Discovering God's Presence enhances the quality of spiritual life. Because people frequently lose sight of and become oblivious to God's will, which eventually becomes centered on their own desires. Therefore, each person can attain a quality of spiritual life aimed at discovering God in their life with the aid of the spiritual activities that have been described. People who genuinely live out their faith are demonstrated by their willingness to consistently partake in spiritual activities to develop their spiritual lives. This aims to demonstrate that people should work toward believing in Christ, who is both truly God and truly human. Because of the person of Christ, people are able to perceive and sense God's constant presence in their everyday lives. Therefore, in Catholic teachings, it is explained that Christ is central to all Christian teachings, so humans should emulate Jesus as a role model for life. Until finally, humans are able to do what God desires in their life's pilgrimage. Moreover, through the person of Jesus, who is a messenger from God, humans are invited to realize that God is always present in human life to reach the purpose of human life, which is to reunite with God or to attain eternal life.

5. CONCLUSION

It is clear from the explanation above that reason and faith are necessary for developing a relationship with God. Reason and faith are not mutually exclusive; both demonstrate that the pursuit of God in this life is accomplished via the light of faith, which in the end allows people to seek God and sense His presence in their lives. When people are able to develop a relationship with God, specifically by fostering a spiritual life as one way to create an intimate relationship with God, the process of seeking God and discovering His presence is accomplished. Last but not least, every person can fulfill their faith in Christ, who is both genuinely God and genuinely human. Jesus invites people to recognize that God is always there for them. God does all of this out of a profound love for people. Consequently, God took on human form. and everyone can walk in God's footsteps to fulfill life's ultimate goal of becoming one with God.

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