

# *Encountering Mystery*

*God is "the desire by which we all live"*

Sebastian Moore

The whole story of creation, Incarnation and our incorporation into Christ's body tells us that ***God desires us, as if we were God***, as if we were that unconditional response to God's self giving that God's self makes in the life of the Trinity.. We are created so that we may be caught up in this, so that we may grow into the wholehearted love of God by ***learning that God loves us as God loves God***.

Rowan Williams

As for this "finding" of God, we cannot even look for Him, and we cannot find Him unless He has first found us. We cannot begin to seek Him without a special gift of His grace, yet if we wait for grace to move us, before beginning to seek Him, we will probably never begin'.

Thomas Merton

***Prayer is the place where we sort out our desires  
and where we are ourselves sorted out by the desires we choose to follow.***

Ann & Barry Ulanov

In the lovely story of the blind beggar Bartimaeus- who is a delightful companion for us in our daily life - Bartimaeus cries out from the edge of the roadside as Jesus passes by. His cry is directed towards Jesus, but it is simply a cry for help. Jesus' disciples tell Bartimaeus to be quiet, but he cries all the louder. Jesus stands still, and looking at Bartimaeus ,and asks him: **"What do you want me to do for you?"** Here Bartimaeus is being asked to "lose his life", that smaller, surface life that is so often pre-occupied with goals, fears, and desires, a life that is not remotely the whole of who he really is. Bartimaeus, it seems, has stood on the edge for his whole life, watching life pass him by, and it seems even now, that the

---

Philip Carter is a retired Anglican Priest. He was the inaugural president of the Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction (AECSD). He ran the Julian Centre in Adelaide, an independent and ecumenical centre for spirituality, from 1997-2009.

Contact: [juliancentre@gmail.com](mailto:juliancentre@gmail.com)

disciples will stifle his chance to be in touch with a deeper part of himself. But he throws off his cloak, surrendering his old life, and gets in touch with his deepest desire: "I want my sight back".

Our deepest desire is what God desires.: to find it is a lifetime's work. To want what God wants is written into the very fabric of our being. Our task is to pay attention.

*Tell me, what is it you plan to do  
With your one wild and precious life?*  
Mary Oliver

If God so made us that only He Himself can ultimately satisfy us, He does not withhold that gift of Himself. It is ours already, but, being too blind to recognise it, we have to discover it, not in religious theories, but in the warmth and sweetness and dryness and terror of actual living.

H.A. Williams

It would seem that our Lord finds our desires, not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling around with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered to us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he can't imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea side. We are far too easily pleased.

C.S.Lewis