

One of the most common questions that would arise during my formation process for ordination was *Where is God in all this?* I would often wonder that when I would think *Why me? Why am I going through this process? How will I balance the personal and the spiritual in my life? What is God calling me to do?*

God is a mysterious presence. We all have had our own personal revelations about the presence of God in our lives. *Why me? Why am I going through this? Why do people have to suffer and be hated for who they are? None of us has the answers. None of us can speak for God, not even the Pat Robertsons of the world.*

In our moments of joy and sorrow, God is there. We may not perceive it at the time, but later, as we look back, we realize that indeed God was there in those moments. Not all of them were sunshine, lollipops, and rainbows; but the presence of God was with us through it all.

In the time of our Gospel reading this morning, we have a crazed ruler, paranoid about the fact that a King has been born to save Israel. In a scenario sadly familiar to us in this present time, we have had a ruler desperate to keep their power intact. Herod does everything in his power to stay in control, devising a plan to find out where this baby king is and then stopping him. Anything goes, including murder.

Thankfully the wise men seeking the baby Jesus were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod. Herod in a desperate attempt to stay in power then authorizes the slaughter of all infants under the age of two. Was this God's plan? We don't know. But God was indeed involved. The infant Jesus was spared from the slaughter by

one of Gods angels warning Joseph in a dream to take the child to Egypt until circumstances improve.

We all have had our personal epiphany moments. God is revealed when you least expect it, and in places you would never think. In a hospital room at the time of death, in places of squalor where people are sick, starving, and dying, in war torn areas where hope is kept alive that good will triumph over evil. God is there. In those times where we feel beat up and hopeless, God is there. We may not have physically seen God revealed, as the shepherds and wise men did, but indeed the presence of God is there.

Today we take heart, that God has been revealed in our celebration of the Epiphany. God was physically among us in those times, spiritually among us in this present time. Ever revealing Gods self in our daily lives and in our trials and tribulations. We may not think it, but in those aha moments when we reflect upon our lives, we understand God has indeed been revealed to us and has been with us all along.

So arise, shine, for your light has come. It will never be extinguished if we keep the flame lit. The love of God is always there. Seek it and be healed.

Where is God in all this? Right here, right now, with us.