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by Pat Marrin

[View Author Profile](#)
[patrickjmarrin@gmail.com.](mailto:patrickjmarrin@gmail.com)

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“My heart is moved with pity” (Matthew 15:32).

[*Isa 25:6-10A; Matt 15:29-37*](#)

What we know about God from philosophy is based on the reasonable assumption that because there is creation there must be a Creator, a First Cause and Unmoved Mover. But for believers, everything we know about God is from Jesus Christ, who made God visible and personal during his human journey on this earth.

We believe that God is love because Jesus was a loving person who cared deeply about others, comforted and restored those damaged by life's troubles and failures, welcomed the lost, the outcast and lonely, lifted up the poor and encouraged everyone to trust in the essential goodness of life and not to be afraid.

In today's Gospel, we see Jesus fulfilling one of the many prophecies of Isaiah about God's desire to care for his people. He heals people suffering from all manner of sickness and limitation, giving sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, making the cripples walk and restoring those afflicted with deformities and illnesses. He feels deep pity for the crowds who have followed him into the wilderness and are now hungry. He multiplies a few loaves and fish to provide an abundant feast.

This is what God is like. Jesus does what God would do if God were among us, human like us, experiencing life with a human heart moved with pity. Gandhi once said that if God were to come into a world filled with hungry people, God would come as bread. Jesus called himself bread from heaven, the bread of life. Even death could not defeat this gift of life. Jesus revealed God's desire to lift the veil of sadness and wipe away the tears of sorrow by destroying death. By his death and resurrection, Jesus revealed that the ultimate promise of God is about giving us abundant life.

The season of Advent first leads us into the desert so we can experience how much we need God. By leaving the bright lights of the city, we learn to see the stars again in the night sky. Undistracted by other wants and needs, we rediscover our longing for what is essential, what fills us with wonder and questioning. If we ponder the great loneliness that covers the earth like a veil, we can again let pity well up from the depths for all the suffering in our world. This is the human condition we share with every other person on the earth.

Advent invites us to renew our faith in the God Jesus revealed in so many human ways. We are invited to pray again as children pray, hearts filled with expectation and trust that what is promised will come true. What do we most want to happen for us this year at Christmas? What secret desire, needed change, difficult decision, audacious prayer will we bring to our next meeting with God? Because of Jesus, this encounter could be face to face.

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