

THE DIFFERENT WAYS TO ENCOUNTER GOD

by Pope Benedict XVI

Taken from Zenit News Agency (www.zenit.org)

Speaking to youth at a gathering of 500,000 of them in Loreto over the weekend of Sept 1 -2 2007. He had a question and answer session with them.

A young Italian woman, Sara Simonetta, explained to the Pontiff that she believed "in the God that had touched my heart, but I feel a lot of insecurity, questions, fear."

"I feel human solitude, and I would like to feel God close. Holiness (Holy Father), in this silence, "Where is God?" she asked.

Before all, the Pontiff said, "the beauty of creation is one of the sources in which we can touch the beauty of God, we can see that the Creator exists and is good, that it is true what sacred Scripture says in the creation account."

Second, he explained, it is possible to perceive the divine presence "listening to the word of God in the great liturgical celebrations, in the great music of faith."

Benedict XVI then told the story of a woman who converted to Christianity after having listened to the music of Bach, Handel and Mozart.

Third, the Pope told the assembly of youth, one can discover God through "personal dialogue with Christ." "He doesn't always respond, but there are moments in which he really responds," the Pontiff said.

A last way of discovering God, according to the Holy Father, is "friendship, companionship in the faith."

"And we experience that all of this does not come from nothing, but has a source, that the silent God is also a God who speaks, who reveals himself, and above all, that we can be witnesses of his presence, that our faith truly brings about light, even for others."

The Pope added: "On one hand, we have to accept that in this world, God is silent, but we shouldn't make ourselves deaf when he speaks, when he manifests his presence on so many occasions, above all in Creation, in the liturgy, in friendship within the Church. And, full of his presence, we can also give light to others."