



A weekly reflection by members
of the Precious Blood Community

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“Whoever is without love does not know God,
for God is love.” (1 John 4:8)



I have a friend who serves as a priest in China. As part of his travels, he visited some nuns in the underground Church, cloistered in a makeshift warehouse that served as their communal living space. These nuns were mostly illiterate, bound together by their communal prayer and their shared ministry of charity in their local communities. They were overjoyed to be visited by a priest who could celebrate the Sacraments with them.

As he opened the scriptures for that day, he read these words: “Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love.” (1 John 4:8). He proceeded to preach his homily and celebrated the Eucharist with them.

After the mass, a few of the women approached him, and they asked him: “Speak to us more about how God is love... we have never heard that God is love.”

These wonderful women, whose very lives testify to the love of Christ, had never heard that God is love. The words landed fresh on their ears because they had never heard them before. These words, which seem to us so foundational and inherent as to become rote, are words people are waiting to hear. Not because they do not love, but because hearing the Word is a life-giving experience.

We think of evangelization as this conversion of the non-believer into belief. But Paul does something more than tear down the false Pagan God to build up the true Christ. He connects the pieces that are embedded in the Athenian world with the love of Jesus Christ. He reaches into their worship, their poetry, their human longing for a living God, and invites them to encounter Christ not as a theological pursuit, but a self-discovery in the field of life.

In the challenge of today's secular and multi-religious world,

We spend a lot of time worrying about how we are to preach Christ.

But the Gospel reminds us that every act of the Spirit begins with listening.

We must listen first:

Listen to the Spirit who guides us into the truth.

Listen to the people who are in our lives,

Listen to the pieces and discover the wholeness.

God be with you.

Newton is currently a graduate student at Catholic Theological Union and is in formation with the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. To learn more about the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, [click here](#).

This weekly reflection is made available to everyone in our Precious Blood family.

Feel free to share it with others. Would you like to write a reflection?

If so, please contact Vicky Otto at votto@pbspiritualityinstitute.org