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Beyond All This

By Jim Perretta

Beyond symbol, art, and myth
Beyond history, politics, and dogma
There breathes my God.

Beyond bigotry, self-interest, and greed
Beyond intolerance, oppression, and violence
There waits my God.

Beyond uncertainty, skepticism, and doubt
Beyond despair, suffering, and loss
There breathes my God.

For years, I doubted my God
I felt betrayed by intolerant dogma
I thought I was abandoned and insignificant
I felt alone and isolated.

But in the isolation, I felt a presence.
In the despair, I found meaning.
At first, I thought I was just falling back on past indoctrinated lessons
Fabricated truths, designed to soften the blow of no life after death, no inherent meaning to life.

But then I recalled a powerful and vivid memory:
I was a very young child, perhaps an infant
And I felt so comforted, even though I was alone.
Perhaps, it was the spirit of my Mother, permeating my whole existence
But it felt like God and that feeling has stayed with me.
You see: God was there before I was taught to look for God.
God was there, breathing and waiting.

Beyond fear, worry, and anxiety
Beyond injustice, sickness, and even death
There breathes my God.

Breathing so softly, you could almost miss it altogether.
I almost missed it -- by trying too hard to hear it and, later, by trying so hard to shut it out.

Beyond sin, confession, and forgiveness
Beyond pageantry, prayers, and sacraments
There sleeps my God.
Sleeping so soundly, dreaming us into existence.
Perhaps, we join with that Spirit when we, ourselves, fall asleep – in Life, as well as in Death.

Perhaps: This is my truth.
This is my God.
This is my All.

Jim Perretta, Phd. was born and raised in suburban Chicago. He currently resides in Guelph, Ontario, and works as a clinical psychologist in a rehabilitation hospital. Besides working in the helping professions, his activities and interests include reading, writing, exploring the great outdoors, spending time with family and friends, dancing, and laughing whole-heartedly.



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