

# WHY AND HOW TO BELIEVE IN GOD?...<sup>1</sup>

Translated from the Catechesis No. 1 "From zero to the Eucharist ..." on how to go gradually to the Party without end!  
Vallo della Lucania – Thursday 19 March 2015 / 18:30-19:45

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We will read and try to explain some passages of the

- **Word of God (OT, NT)**
  - **Teaching of the Catholic Church (from the Fathers to Now)**
  - **Experiences...**
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## Introduction:

- Example of **why** to believe (the "death box" and the only way out)...
- And **how** in *Fides Quae / Fides Qua* (Pope Benedict XVI)...
- Theory of "Intelligent design" ...

## SUMMARY

### 1. WHY BELIEVE in GOD? <sup>2</sup>

3

### 2. HOW TO BELIEVE IN GOD? <sup>3</sup>

7

## CONCLUSION

14

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Supervision: Friar Volantino V. of Jesus and Mary, and Friar Nathaniel M.A.-A ;  
With the aid of the Little Friars and Little Nuns of Jesus and Mary.

<sup>2</sup> Partial compilation and organization of the topic: Sr. Effatà M. T.-S. ; Friar Michael M.M.-M. and Friar Nathaniel M.A.-A

<sup>3</sup> Partial compilation and organization of the topic: Sr. Effatà M. T.-S. ; Friar Michael M.M.-M. and Friar Nathaniel M.A.-A

## 1. WHY BELIEVE IN GOD?

3

- O.T. - Believe in God to reach the blessed Immortality and eternal glory for which He created us (Wis 2:1-2, 6-7, 21-23; 3:1-9; Dn 7:27; Ps 34:12-13)  
 - Believe in God to stand firm (Is 7:9b)
- N.T. - Without faith it is impossible to be pleasing to God (Heb 11:6)  
 - Faith is the Foundation of our spiritual life (Jude 1:20)  
 - Believe in & know God to be saved, resurrected, blessed (Luke 1:45; Mark 16:16; John 11:25; 17:3; 6:40)  
 - Believe in God to reach the reality of which earthly feasts are only a shadow (Col 2:16-17)  
 - God created us so that we would seek for Him (Acts 17:26-28)
- Fathers - St. Justin faced martyrdom because he was most certain of receiving a suitable reward in heaven (Acts of the Martyrdom of St. Justin and Companions)  
 - Our heart is restless until it rests in God (St. Augustine of Hippo)
- Medieval - We need to believe in God because He is our Creator and the highest good (St. Catherine of Siena)
- Modern - We need to believe in and know God in order to truly know ourselves (St. Teresa of Avila)
- Postmod. - There is an emptiness in your heart if you do not (believe in and) love God (St. John Bosco)  
 - Faith gives a response to the anxiety of man about his future (Vatican Council II)  
 - “Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for” (CCC)  
 - We need to believe in God to be fully saved by Him (CCC)  
 - A world without God is a world without meaning (Benedict XVI)
- Pers. Exp. - Why believe in God – to put it simply? (Friar Volantino Verde)  
 - See the little illustration on the Green Flyer... (Anonymous)

## 2. HOW TO BELIEVE IN GOD?

7

- O.T. - The temptation of foolishness and possible solutions on how to rise to the understanding that God exists (Ps 14:1; 53:1; Wis 13:1-9; Eccl 11:5; Sir 17:7; Is 11:2)  
 - Seek for God also through the testings, signs, and wonders that He gives (Deut 4:34; 7:19; 29:2; Is 7:11; Judg 6:17; Ps 85:16-17)  
 - Pay attention to different ways that God uses to speak to us. (cf. Job 33:13-14ff)  
 - Seek God and find Him, abandoning the wicked way and trusting in His mercy (Is 55:6-7)  
 - Seek God with all your heart... (Jer 29:13-14)
- N.T. - Seek and find – also signs and many proofs (Luke 11:9; Cf. Matt 7:7; John 6:26-27; 4:48; Acts 1:3)  
 - Other rational solutions: how to rise to the understanding that God exists, overcoming the temptation of foolishness... (Rom 1:20-23)  
 - How can they believe in God...if no one announces Him? (Rom 10:14)
- Fathers - Miracles, both extraordinary and ordinary (natural), lead us to God (St. Augustine of Hippo)  
 - Reasoning does not create truths but discovers them (Ibid.)
- Medieval - The ontological proof of St. Anselm on the existence of God (St. Anselm of Aosta)  
 - The 5 proofs of the existence of God – by St. Thomas Aquinas (St. Thomas Aquinas)
- Modern - Miracles and signs of God increase our faith so we do not drown... (St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Teresa of Avila)
- Postmod. - With reason alone one can rise to an understanding that God exists (Pope Gregory XVI, Vat. Council I)  
 - Miracles, Prophecies and other most certain signs...are motives of credibility (Vat. Council I, CCC)  
 - But with reason alone it is not possible to explain many mysteries of God (Vatican Council I)  
 - The prophecies of Our Lady of Fatima and their striking and precise fulfillment  
 - Confirmation...: With reason alone one can rise to the understanding that God exists (Pius XI, Vat. Council II)  
 - There is a foundation which holds me up precisely because I am not the one who made it (J. Ratzinger)  
 - We must ask what things are like in and of themselves in order to reach the truth (Ibid.)  
 - Faith and listening: How, therefore, do we believe? (St. John Paul II)  
 - The hearing of faith calls for discipleship, following after the Good Shepherd... (Pope Francis)  
 - “Seeing the signs of Jesus leads to faith” and “Faith leads to a deeper vision” (Ibid.)  
 - Believing, hearing and seeing becomes possible with Jesus: the Word made flesh (Ibid.)  
 - Faith and Reason both come from God and cannot contradict each other (Ibid.)

- Pers. Exp.*
- The experience of PRAYER
  - The Shroud of Turin
  - The Eucharistic Miracles of Lanciano, Cascia and Siena
  - The Wonder of Guadalupe
  - The story of the mechanic and the cow...
  - The Glorious Vision of Friar Volantino and, six months later, the surprising homily of a priest...
  - The story of the desert fathers: the young man who had to search for God like the air he breathed...
  - The man who reflected on the existence of God through so many young lives given to the Lord...
  - Dig and dig, and you will find a treasure...
  - The example of the orange, the intelligent man, and the earth which lacks intelligence...
  - Example of the chair (or theory of intelligent design)
  - The story of the old man of the villa in Noto, when some brothers were hitchhiking to Avola
- Fam. Ppl.*
- The regularity, beauty, and order of nature testifies to their intelligent source (M. T. Cicero)
  - The artificer who is able to do what man cannot should be identified as the divinity (Ibid.)

### 3. CONCLUSION

14

- Stories*
- The story of the two scientists and the model of the universe...
  - The story of the barber, regarding the existence of God...
- Summary*
- Intelligence is a gift of the Holy Spirit (Cf. Is 11), and should be used sensibly...
  - Read and give the Green Flyer

## 1. WHY BELIEVE IN GOD?

### Word of God

#### OLD TESTAMENT

##### BELIEVE IN GOD TO REACH THE BLESSED IMMORTALITY AND ETERNAL GLORY FOR WHICH HE CREATED US

- ✓ *“For, not thinking rightly, [the wicked] said among themselves: ‘Brief and troubled is our lifetime; there is no remedy for our dying, nor is anyone known to have come back from Hades. For by mere chance were we born, and hereafter we shall be as though we had not been; because the breath in our nostrils is smoke, and reason a spark from the beating of our hearts...Come, therefore, let us enjoy the good things that are here, and make use of creation with youthful zest. Let us have our fill of costly wine and perfumes, and let no springtime pass us by....These were their thoughts, but they erred; for their wickedness blinded them, and they did not know the hidden counsels of God, neither did they count on a recompense for holiness nor discern the innocent souls’ reward. For God [created man for IMMORTALITY]; in the image of his own nature he made us.”*  
(Wis 2:1-2, 6-7, 21-23) [bracket translated from the Italian, CEI 1974]
- ✓ *“The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace. For if to others, indeed, they seem punished, yet is their hope full of IMMORTALITY; chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself. In the time of their judgment they shall shine and dart about as sparks through stubble; they shall judge nations and rule over peoples, and the LORD shall be their King forever. Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love: Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with the elect.” (Wis 3:1-9)*
- ✓ *“Then the kingship and dominion and majesty of all the kingdoms under the heavens shall be given to the people of the holy ones of the Most High, whose kingship shall be an everlasting kingship, whom all dominions shall serve and obey.” (Dan 7:27).*
- ✓ *“Come, children, listen to me; I will teach you fear of the LORD. Who is the man who delights in life, who [longs for length of days, to enjoy what is good]” (for all eternity - cf. Ps 21:4)? (Ps 34:12-13) [bracket translated from the Italian, CEI 1974]*  
- *“To live without end, and not (ever – cf. John 8:51) see the tomb?” (cf. Ps 48:10) [translated from the Italian, CEI 1974]*

##### BELIEVE IN GOD TO STAND FIRM

- ✓ *“Unless your faith is firm, you shall not be firm!” (Is 7:9b)*

#### NEW TESTAMENT

##### WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO BE PLEASING TO GOD

- ✓ *“Without **faith**, it is impossible to **please him**, for anyone who approaches God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” (Heb 11:6)*

##### FAITH IS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE

- ✓ *“Build your spiritual building upon your most holy Faith” (Jude 1:20) [translated from the Italian, CEI 1974]*

##### BELIEVE IN AND KNOW GOD TO BE SAVED, RESURRECTED, AND BLESSED

- ✓ *“**Blessed** are you who **believed**...” (Luke 1:45).*
- ✓ *“Whoever **believes** and **is baptized** will be **saved**; whoever does not believe will be condemned.” (Mark 16:16) That is: **condemned** to pay for their own sins (if we are speaking about an altruistic person).*
- ✓ *“Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live.”*
  - (John 11:25)

- ✓ This is eternal life: that **they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ.** (John 17:3)
- ✓ “For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and **believes** in him may have eternal life; and I shall raise him on the last day.” (John 6:40)

#### BELIEVE IN GOD TO REACH THE REALITY OF WHICH EARTHLY FEASTS ARE ONLY A SHADOW

- ✓ “Let no one, then, pass judgment on you in matters of food or drink or with regard to a festival or new moon or sabbath. These are shadows of things to come; the reality belongs to Christ.” (Col 2:16-17)

#### GOD CREATED US SO THAT WE WOULD SEEK FOR HIM

- ✓ “He made from one the whole human race to dwell on the entire surface of the earth, and he fixed the ordered seasons and the boundaries of their regions, **so that people might seek God, even perhaps grope for him and find him, though indeed he is not far from any one of us.** For ‘In him we live and move and have our being,’ as even some of your poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’” (Acts 17:26-28).

## Teaching of the Catholic Church

### PATRISTIC AGE

#### ST. JUSTIN FACED MARTYRDOM BECAUSE HE WAS MOST CERTAIN OF RECEIVING A SUITABLE REWARD IN HEAVEN

- ✓ --- About **ST. JUSTIN** (Martyr ; beginning of 2nd Century - † 164 ): “[The executioner of St. Justin] said: ‘Do you have an idea that you will go up to heaven to receive some suitable rewards?’ Justin said: **‘It is not an idea that I have; it is something I know well and hold to be most certain.’**”  
(Acts of the Martyrdom of St. Justin and Companions, in: Office of Read., 1 June)

#### OUR HEART IS RESTLESS UNTIL IT RESTS IN GOD

- ✓ --- **ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO** (Bishop and Doctor of the Church; 354- † 430): “You are great, Lord, and worthy of praise; great is Your power, and Your wisdom incalculable. And...man, a little particle of your creation, wishes to praise You. It is You who cause him to take delight in Your praises, for **You have made us for Yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in You.**”  
(ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO, Confessions, 1, 1, 1)

### MEDIEVAL AGE

#### WE NEED TO BELIEVE IN GOD BECAUSE HE IS OUR CREATOR AND THE HIGHEST GOOD

- ✓ --- **ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA** (Virgin, Doctor of the Church, and Patron of Italy; 1347- † 1380): “Eternal God, eternal Trinity...**You are my Creator, eternal Trinity, and I am your creature...You are the highest good, one we can neither comprehend nor fathom. And I know that you are beauty and wisdom itself.**”  
(ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA, Office of Read., 29 April)

### MODERN AGE

#### WE NEED TO BELIEVE IN AND KNOW GOD IN ORDER TO TRULY KNOW OURSELVES

- ✓ --- **ST. TERESA OF AVILA** (Virgin, Reformer of the Carmelite Order, Doctor of the Church; 1515 - † 1582): “I believe we shall **never learn to know ourselves except by endeavouring to know God, for, beholding His greatness we are struck by our own baseness, His purity shows our foulness, and by meditating on His humility we find how very far we are from being humble.**”  
(ST. TERESA OF AVILA, The Interior Castle, First Mansions, Ch. 2, n.10)

**THERE IS AN EMPTINESS IN YOUR HEART IF YOU DO NOT (BELIEVE IN AND) LOVE GOD**

- ✓ --- **ST. JOHN BOSCO** (Priest and Founder of the Salesians, 1815 - † 1888): *"You have been created to love God. You can love anything on earth, but you will always feel an emptiness in your heart if you do not [believe in and] love God!"* (ST. JOHN BOSCO, *work in progress*)

**FAITH GIVES A RESPONSE TO THE ANXIETY OF MAN ABOUT HIS FUTURE**

- ✓ --- **VATICAN COUNCIL II** (1963 - 1965): *"Hence to every thoughtful man a solidly established faith provides the answer to his anxiety about what the future holds for him."*  
(VATICAN COUNCIL II, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 18).

**"ONLY IN GOD WILL HE FIND THE TRUTH AND HAPPINESS HE NEVER STOPS SEARCHING FOR"**

- ✓ --- **CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH** (1992): *"The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for."* (CCC 27)

**WE NEED TO BELIEVE IN GOD TO BE FULLY SAVED BY HIM**

- ✓ --- **CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH** (1992): *"**Faith is necessary for [full] salvation.** The Lord himself affirms: 'He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned' (Mk 16:16)." (CCC 183)*

**A WORLD WITHOUT GOD IS A WORLD WITHOUT MEANING**

- ✓ --- **BENEDICT XVI** (Pope from 2005 to 2013) writes: *"the first fundamental gift that Faith offers us is the certainty that God exists. A world without God can only be a world without meaning. For where then does everything that is come from? In any case, it has no spiritual purpose. It is somehow simply there and has neither any goal nor any sense. Then there are no standards of good or evil. Then only what is stronger than the other can assert itself. Power is then the only principle. Truth does not count, it actually does not exist. Only if things have a spiritual reason, are intended and conceived - only if there is a Creator God who is good and wants the good - can the life of man also have meaning."*  
(BENEDICT XVI, *The Church and the Scandal of Sexual Abuse*, III.1 (11 April 2019), Vatican City, in: CORRIERE DELLA SERA, [https://www.corriere.it/english/19\\_aprile\\_11/benedict-xvi-the-church-and-the-scandal-of-sexual-abuse-8e40d438-5b9c-11e9-ba57-a3df5eacbd16.shtml?refresh\\_ce-cp](https://www.corriere.it/english/19_aprile_11/benedict-xvi-the-church-and-the-scandal-of-sexual-abuse-8e40d438-5b9c-11e9-ba57-a3df5eacbd16.shtml?refresh_ce-cp) [accessed 25 October 2019])

## Personal Experiences

### MEDITATION

**WHY BELIEVE IN GOD – TO PUT IT SIMPLY?**

- ✓ *"Why believe in God?...  
Because (to put it simply) it is the only way that we can leave the 'box of death!'-  
a word to the wise!"*  
(FRIAR VOLANTINO VERDE, *Official site of the Little Friars and Little Nuns of Jesus and Mary*, in:  
[http://nuke.fratipoveri.net/  
Homeltaliano/APOLOGIAECCLESIOLOGICAscritta/Perch%C3%A8CredereinDio/tabid/159/Default.aspx](http://nuke.fratipoveri.net/Homeltaliano/APOLOGIAECCLESIOLOGICAscritta/Perch%C3%A8CredereinDio/tabid/159/Default.aspx) [21-04-2017]).

**SEE THE LITTLE ILLUSTRATION ON THE GREEN FLYER...**

- ✓ *"Too young to think about God, too...too...too..."*  
(ANONYMOUS, *Too young to think about God...*, in: [http://nuke.fratipoveri.net/Homeltaliano/  
APOLOGIAECCLESIOLOGICAscritta/Perch%C3%A8CredereinDio/tabid/159/Default.aspx](http://nuke.fratipoveri.net/Homeltaliano/APOLOGIAECCLESIOLOGICAscritta/Perch%C3%A8CredereinDio/tabid/159/Default.aspx) [26-04-2017]).

## 2. HOW TO BELIEVE IN GOD?

### Word of God

#### OLD TESTAMENT

##### THE TEMPTATION OF FOOLISHNESS AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS ON HOW TO RISE TO THE UNDERSTANDING THAT GOD EXISTS

- ✓ *"The **foolish** think, 'there is no God.' They are corrupt, and do abominable things." (cf. Ps 14:1; 53:1)*
- ✓ *"**Foolish by nature** were all who were in ignorance of God, and who from the good things seen did not succeed in knowing the one who is, and from studying the works **did not discern the artisan**; instead either fire, or wind, or the swift air, or the circuit of the stars, or the mighty water, or the luminaries of heaven, the governors of the world, they considered gods. Now if out of joy in their beauty they thought them gods, let them know how far more excellent is the Lord than these; for the original source of beauty fashioned them. Or if they were struck by their might and energy, let them realize from these things how much more powerful is the one who made them. For from the greatness and the beauty of created things their original **author, by analogy, is seen**. But yet, for these the blame is less; for they have gone astray perhaps, though they seek God and wish to find him. For they search busily among his works, but are distracted by what they see, because the things seen are fair. But again, not even these are pardonable. For if they so far succeeded in knowledge that they could speculate about the world, how did they not more quickly find its Lord?" (Wis 13:1-9)*
- ✓ *"Just as you do not know how the life breath enters the human frame in the mother's womb, so you do not know the work of God, who is working in everything." (Ecc 11:5)*
- ✓ *"He set his eye upon their hearts to show them the majesty of his works." (Sir 17:8) [RSVCE]*
- ✓ *"The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him: a spirit of wisdom and of understanding." (Is 11:2)*

##### SEEK FOR GOD ALSO THROUGH THE TESTINGS, SIGNS, AND WONDERS THAT HE GIVES

- ✓ *"Or did any god venture to go and take a nation for himself from the midst of another nation, by **testings**, by **signs** and **wonders**,...all of which the LORD, your God, did for you in Egypt before your very eyes?" (Deut 4:34)*
- ✓ *"[Remember] the **great testings** which your own eyes have seen, the **signs** and **wonders**, the strong hand and outstretched arm with which the LORD, your God, brought you out." (Deut 7:19)*
- ✓ *"You have seen with your own eyes all that the LORD did in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh and all his servants and to all his land, the **great testings** your own eyes have seen, and those **great signs** and **wonders**." (Deut 29:1-2)*
- ✓ *"**Ask for a sign** from the LORD, your God; let it be as deep as Sheol, or as high as the sky!" (Is 7:11)*
- ✓ *"If you look on me with favor, give me a **sign** that [Y]ou are the one speaking with me." (Judg 6:17)*
- ✓ *"Turn to me, be gracious to me;... save the son of your handmaid. Give me a **sign** of your favor!" (cf. Ps 85:16-17)*

##### PAY ATTENTION TO DIFFERENT WAYS THAT GOD USES TO SPEAK TO US

- ✓ *"Why do you complain to him, if he doesn't answer your every word? God speaks **in one way or in another**, but we don't pay attention!" (cf. Job 33:13-14)*

##### SEEK GOD AND FIND HIM, ABANDONING THE WICKED WAY AND TRUSTING IN HIS MERCY

- ✓ *"Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake their way, and sinners their thoughts; let them turn to the LORD to find mercy; to our God, who is generous in forgiving." (Is 55:6-7)*

##### SEEK GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART...

- ✓ *"When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me **with all your heart**, I will let you find me." (Jer 29:13-14)*

## NEW TESTAMENT

### SEEK AND FIND – ALSO SIGNS AND MANY PROOFS

- ✓ **“Seek and you will find”** (Luke 11:9; cf. Matt 7:7)
- ✓ “Jesus...said, ‘...you are looking for me not because you saw signs but because you ate the loaves and were filled. Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life.” (John 6:26-27) “Jesus said to him, ‘Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe.’” (John 4:48).
- ✓ “[Jesus] presented himself alive to them by many proofs after he had suffered, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.” (Acts 1:3).

### OTHER RATIONAL SOLUTIONS: HOW TO RISE TO THE UNDERSTANDING THAT GOD EXISTS, OVERCOMING THE TEMPTATION OF FOOLISHNESS

- ✓ “Ever since the creation of the world, his invisible attributes of eternal power and divinity have been able to be understood and perceived in what he has made. As a result, they have **no excuse**; for although they knew God they did not accord him glory as God or give him thanks. Instead, they became vain in their reasoning, and their senseless minds were darkened. While claiming to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for the likeness of an image of mortal man or of birds or of four-legged animals or of reptiles.” (Rom 1:20-23)

### HOW CAN THEY BELIEVE IN GOD...IF NO ONE ANNOUNCES HIM?

- ✓ “How can they **believe** in him of whom **they have not heard**? And how can they hear without someone to preach?” (Rom 10:14)

## Teaching of the Catholic Church

### PATRISTIC AGE

#### MIRACLES, BOTH EXTRAORDINARY AND ORDINARY (NATURAL), LEAD US TO GOD, IN A SIMPLE AND OBJECTIVE WAY

- ✓ **ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO** (Bishop and Doctor of the Church; 354 - † 430): “The prophet cried out to you and he cried in vain: ‘do not be like a horse or mule, without intelligence.’ You had these things under your eyes, and you disregarded them. The marvels that God works every day have lost their value, not because they are easy, but because of their continual repetition. ...Admire such things, and wake up...The people were astonished by the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ satisfied many thousands of people with five loaves, and then are not amazed that with so few grains the fields are filled for the harvest. The people saw water change to wine and were stunned. How does this differ from what happens when water comes in contact with the roots of the vine? Here, too, it is He who makes one and works also in the other....And what is the origin of man himself who wonders? Where was he? Whence did he come? Whence came the structure of his body, and the differentiation of each member? Whence comes his stature, so pleasing to the eye? From what primary elements, and from what contemptible origin? ...And he marvels at the other things, while he who marvels is himself a great prodigy!”

(ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO, *Discussions*, CXXVI, 3, 4)

#### REASONING DOES NOT CREATE TRUTHS BUT DISCOVERS THEM

- ✓ “What does he arrive at who knows how to use his reason well, if not the truth? It is not the truth that arrives at itself with reasoning, but it is the truth which is sought by those who use their reason....Confess that you are not what the truth is, for truth cannot search for itself; you, on the other hand, have reached it, not by passing through one place or another, but by searching for it with the disposition of your present mind....reasoning does not create these truths, but discovers them. They, therefore, subsist in themselves even before they are discovered, and once they are discovered they renew us.”

(ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO, *De vera religione*, 39.72-73)

## MEDIEVAL AGE

### THE ONTOLOGICAL PROOF OF ST. ANSELM ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD (it worked well for the mentality of the period)

- ✓ **ST. ANSELM OF AOSTA** (Bishop and Doctor of the Church; 1033 - † 1109: The argument *a priori*: the idea present in the mind of man of that-than-which-nothing-greater-can-be-thought requires, by logical necessity, the existence of a Being that corresponds to this idea. “[1] Now we believe that You are something than which nothing greater can be thought. Or can it be that a thing of such a nature does not exist, since ‘the Fool has said in his heart, there is no God’ (Ps 13:1; 52:1)? But surely, when this same Fool hears what I am speaking about, namely, ‘something-than-which-nothing-greater-can-be-thought,’ he understands what he hears, and what he understands is in his mind, even if he does not understand that it actually exists. For it is one thing for an object to exist in the mind, and another thing to understand that an object actually exists. ...[2] And surely that-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought cannot exist in the mind alone...”

(ST. ANSELM OF AOSTA, *Proslogion* 2-3, 97-99)

### THE 5 PROOFS OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD – BY ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

- ✓ **ST. THOMAS AQUINAS** (Priest and Doctor of the Church; 1225 - † 1274): “That God exists, one can prove in five ways: 1) THE FIRST CAUSE: ... all moves because it has been moved... 2) THE EFFICIENT CAUSE:...it is impossible to find anything that is the efficient cause of itself (e.g. it is impossible for a house to build itself) 3) CONTINGENT (PASSING) REALITY:...some things are born and finish, which means that they are capable of being and of not being (fundamental for existence)...if there were no (necessary and primary) entity, it would be impossible that something could begin to exist. 4) DEGREES OF PERFECTION:...It is a fact that there is a gradation in things [more or less good, true, etc.] But the greater or lesser grade is attributed to different things according to how much they more or less match to an absolute [model] whom we call God.. 5) THE FINALITY OF THINGS:... Physical bodies work towards an aim...Now, that which lacks intelligence does not tend towards an aim unless it is directed by knowledgeable and intelligent being, as an arrow is directed by an archer. There is, therefore, some kind of intelligent being by whom all natural things are ordered to an aim: and this being’s name is God.” (cf. ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, S. Th. I.q. 2,a. 3)

## MODERN AGE

### THE MIRACLES AND THE SIGNS OF GOD INCREASE OUR FAITH SO THAT WE DO NOT DROWN...

- ✓ **ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA** (Priest and Founder of the Company of Jesus; 1491 - † 1556): “The FIRST MIRACLE PERFORMED AT THE MARRIAGE FEAST OF CANA IN GALILEE (John 2:1-11). First Point. Christ our Lord and the disciples were invited to the marriage feast. Second Point. His Mother calls attention to the shortage of wine, saying to Him, ‘They have no wine.’ She bids the servants, ‘Whatsoever He shall say to you do.’ Third point. He changed the water into wine, ‘And he manifested his glory and his disciples believed in him.’” (ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, *Spiritual Exercises. Mysteries of the Life of Christ*, n. 276)
- ✓ “CHRIST CALMS THE STORM (Matthew 8:23-27). First Point. While Christ our Lord was asleep in the boat on the sea, a great storm arose. Second Point. His terrified disciples awaken Him. He reprehends them for the little faith they have, and says to them, ‘Why are ye afraid, O ye of little faith?’ Third Point. He commanded the wind and sea to cease, and they obeyed, and the sea became calm. And the men marveled, saying, ‘What manner of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey him?’ CHRIST WALKS UPON THE WATERS (Matthew 14:22-33). First Point. While Christ our Lord remained on the mountain, He commanded His disciples to go away in the boat, and after He had dismissed the crowd, He began to pray alone. Second Point. The boat was buffeted by the waves. Christ came toward them walking upon the waters, and the disciples thought they saw an apparition. Third Point. Christ says to them, ‘It is I, fear not.’ St. Peter at His command walked upon the waters and came to Jesus, but when he doubted, he began to sink. Christ saved him and reprehended him for his little faith. They entered into the boat and the wind ceased.”  
(ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, *Spiritual Exercises. Mysteries of the Life of Christ*, nn. 279-280)
- ✓ **ST. TERESA OF AVILA** (Virgin, Reformer of the Carmelite Order, Doctor of the Church; 1515 - † 1582): “Unless the Almighty had clearly revealed certain mysteries to his soul, causing it to see and

know its God was present, [Moses] could never have undertaken so many and such great labours. Such **sublime revelations** were shown him amidst the thorns of the bush as to give him the **needful courage** for his great deeds on behalf of the Children of Israel. We must not, sisters, search out reasons for understanding the hidden things of God, but, believing Him to be Almighty, we should be convinced that such worms as ourselves, with our limited power of intelligence, are unable to comprehend His wonders. Let us praise Him fervently for **allowing us to understand something of them.**" (ST. TERESA OF AVILA, *Interior Castle, Sixth Mansions*, Ch. 4, n.7)

#### POSTMODERN (OR CONTEMPORARY) AGE

##### WITH REASON ALONE ONE CAN RISE TO AN UNDERSTANDING THAT GOD EXISTS

- ✓ GREGORY XVI (Pope from 1831 to 1846): "Reasoning can prove with certainty the existence of God and the infinity of His perfections." (GREGORIO XVI, *Risposta della Congregazione delle indulgenze* (28 giugno 1840), in *Denzinger* n. 2751 [unpublished translation by pfgsm])
- ✓ "We promise, for the present and for the future, never to teach that: by the lights of upright reason alone, setting aside Divine Revelation, it is not possible to give a true demonstration of the existence of God." (GREGORIO XVI, *Risposta del S. Uffizio: Unzione degli infermi* (14 Settembre 1842), in *Denzinger* n. 2765 [unpublished translation by pfgsm])
- ✓ VATICAN COUNCIL I (1870): "The same Holy Mother Church holds and teaches that God, the source and end of all things, can be known with certainty from the consideration of created things, by the natural power of human reason."  
(VATICAN COUNCIL I, Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Filius* (24 April 1870), Session III, Ch. II)

##### MIRACLES, PROPHECIES, AND OTHER MOST CERTAIN SIGNS SUITED TO EVERY INTELLIGENCE ARE MOTIVES OF CREDIBILITY

- ✓ VATICAN COUNCIL I (1870): "For 'faith is,' as the Apostle testifies, 'the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not.' [Heb. 11:1]. However, in order that the 'obedience' of our faith should be 'consonant with reason' [cf. Rom 12:1], God has willed that to the internal aids of the Holy Spirit there should be joined external proofs of His revelation, namely: **divine facts**, especially **miracles** and **prophecies** which, because they clearly show forth the omnipotence and infinite knowledge of God, are **most certain signs** of a divine revelation, and are suited to the intelligence of all."  
(VATICAN COUNCIL I, Dogm. Const. *Dei Filius* (24 April 1870), Ch. III, Can. 3 and 4, in *Denzinger* 3008-3009)
- ✓ CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: "The **miracles** of Christ and the saints [cf. Mark 16:20; Heb 2:4], **prophecies**, the **Church's growth and holiness**, and her **fruitfulness** and **stability** 'are the **most certain signs** of divine Revelation, adapted to the intelligence of all'; they are '**motives of credibility**'...which show that the assent of faith is 'by no means a blind impulse of the mind' [cf. *Dei Filius* Ch. III, can. 3 and 4]." (CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH n. 156)

##### BUT WITH REASON ALONE IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO EXPLAIN MANY MYSTERIES OF GOD

- ✓ VATICAN COUNCIL I (1870): "If anyone says that in divine revelation there are contained no true mysteries properly so-called, but that all the dogmas of the faith can be understood and demonstrated by properly trained reason from natural principles: let him be anathema."  
(VATICAN COUNCIL I, Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Filius* (24 April 1870), Session IV, Ch. IV, Can. 4.1)

##### THE PROPHECIES OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA AND THEIR STRIKING AND PRECISE FULFILLMENT

- ✓ (From 1917 onward...)
  - the end of the first World War
  - the imminent death of Jacinta and Francisco
  - the long life of Sr. Lucia
  - the great light in heaven before the Second World War – i.e. the aurora borealis that was seen in Portugal, Sicily, and elsewhere, right before that very war began
  - The vision of the assassination of the Pope, the prayers of the little visionaries...then, many years later, the attempted assassination of John Paul II and the mysterious diversion of the bullet.

- *Our Lady declared that Russia would spread her errors all over the world, and asked that that nation be consecrated to her Immaculate Heart: “at the end, my immaculate Heart will triumph.” After the USSR had been spreading its errors all over the world for a long time, John Paul II, remembering the request of Our Lady of Fatima, fulfilled the consecration. Then the USSR crumbled on the 8th of December 1991, the day on which the Catholic Church celebrates the Immaculate Conception...*

(Cf. LITTLE FRIARS AND LITTLE NUNS OF JESUS AND MARY, *Profezie di Fatima che si avverarono...*, <http://www.vimeo.com/15458055> [24 April 2017] [translated from Italian])

#### CONFIRMATION OF THE FIRST VATICAN COUNCIL: WITH REASON ALONE ONE CAN RISE TO THE UNDERSTANDING THAT GOD EXISTS

- ✓ **PIUS XII** (Pope from 1939 to 1958): *“It is now doubted that human reason, without divine revelation and the help of divine grace, can, by arguments drawn from the created universe, prove the existence of a personal God.”*

(PIO XII, *Enc. Humani generis*, 12 Agosto 1950, in Denzinger 3890, [unpublished translation by pfgsm])

- ✓ **VATICAN COUNCIL II** (1963 - 1965): *“As a sacred synod [Vatican I] has affirmed, God, the beginning and end of all things, can be known with certainty from created reality by the light of human reason.”*

(VATICAN COUNCIL II, *Dei Verbum* 6)

#### THERE IS A FOUNDATION WHICH HOLDS ME UP PRECISELY BECAUSE I AM NOT THE ONE WHO MADE IT

- ✓ **JOSEPH RATZINGER** (then a priest and teacher of dogmatic theology at the University of Tübingen from 1966 to 1969): In his book *Introduction to Christianity*, published for the first time in 1968, he says: *“The word ‘Amen’ belongs in Hebrew to the root from which the word ‘belief’ is also derived. Thus ‘Amen’ simply says once again in its own way what belief means: the trusting placing of myself on a [foundation] that bears me up, not because I have made and checked it by my own calculations but, rather, precisely because I have not made it and cannot check it. It expresses the abandonment of oneself...to the [foundation.] ...Yet what happens here is not a blind surrender to the irrational. On the contrary, it is a movement towards the logos, the ratio, towards meaning and so towards truth itself.”*

(JOSEPH RATZINGER, *Introduction to Christianity*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco [CO] 1990, p. 44)

#### WE MUST ASK WHAT THINGS ARE LIKE IN AND OF THEMSELVES IN ORDER TO REACH THE TRUTH

- ✓ *“Practical knowledge does not enquire **what things are like on their own and in themselves, but only whether they will function for us.** The turn towards practical knowledge was accomplished precisely by no longer contemplating being in itself but only how it functioned with regard to our own work. This means that...the very concept of truth was itself fundamentally altered. The notion of the truth of being in itself has been replaced by that of the utility of things for us, which is confirmed by the rightness of the results.”*

(JOSEPH RATZINGER, *Introduction to Christianity*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco [CO] 1990, p. 45)

#### FAITH AND LISTENING: HOW, THEREFORE, DO WE BELIEVE?

- ✓ **ST. JOHN PAUL II** (Pope from 1978 to †2005 ): *“Faith comes from **listening.**”*

(JOHN PAUL II, *Message for the VII World Youth Day*, 1992, n. 4)

#### THE HEARING OF FAITH CALLS FOR DISCIPLESHIP, FOLLOWING AFTER THE GOOD SHEPHERD...

- ✓ **POPE FRANCIS**, (Pope from 2013 to ...): *“**Faith’s hearing** emerges as a form of knowing proper to love: it is a personal hearing, one which recognizes the voice of the Good Shepherd (cf. Jn 10:3-5); it is a hearing which calls for discipleship, as was the case with the first disciples: ‘Hearing him say these things, they followed Jesus’ (Jn 1:37).” (POPE FRANCIS, *Lumen Fidei*, n. 30)*

#### “SEEING THE SIGNS OF JESUS LEADS TO FAITH” AND “FAITH LEADS TO A DEEPER VISION”

- ✓ *“But **faith** is also **tied to sight.** Seeing the signs which Jesus worked leads at times to faith, as in the case of the Jews who, following the raising of Lazarus, ‘having seen what he did, believed in him’ (Jn 11:45). At other times, faith itself leads to deeper vision: ‘If you believe, you will see the glory of*

God' (Jn 11:40). In the end, belief and sight intersect: 'Whoever believes in me believes in him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees him who sent me' (Jn 12:44-45)." (POPE FRANCIS, *Lumen Fidei*, n. 30)

#### BELIEVING, HEARING AND SEEING BECOMES POSSIBLE WITH JESUS: THE WORD MADE FLESH

- ✓ "Joined to hearing, seeing then becomes a form of following Christ, and faith appears as a process of gazing, in which our eyes grow accustomed to peering into the depths. Easter morning thus passes from John who, standing in the early morning darkness before the empty tomb, 'saw and believed' (Jn 20:8), to Mary Magdalene who, after seeing Jesus (cf. Jn 20:14) and wanting to cling to him, is asked to contemplate him as he ascends to the Father, and finally to her full confession before the disciples: "I have seen the Lord!" (Jn 20:18). How does one attain this synthesis between hearing and seeing? It becomes possible through the person of Christ himself, who can be seen and heard. He is the Word made flesh[.]" (POPE FRANCIS, *Lumen Fidei*, n. 30)

#### FAITH AND REASON BOTH COME FROM GOD AND CANNOT CONTRADICT EACH OTHER

- ✓ "Faith is not fearful of reason; on the contrary, it seeks and trusts reason, since 'the light of reason and the light of faith both come from God' and cannot contradict each other."  
(POPE FRANCIS, Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (24 November 2013), n. 242)

## Personal Experiences

### WITNESSES

#### THE EXPERIENCE OF PRAYER

- ✓ *Work in progress*

#### THE SHROUD OF TURIN

- ✓ "On the supernatural existence of a Love that does not come from this world; if it is a forgery, it is the fruit of a Mind that does not come from this world."  
(Cf. FRIAR VOLANTINO VERDE, manuscript *Trinitaria Assicurazione*, prima di copertina ; cf. pp. 1-16 [Italian])

#### THE EUCHARISTIC MIRACLES OF LANCIANO, CASCIA AND SIENA

- ✓ "Flesh, blood, and incorruptibility are scientifically present in the Catholic Eucharist..."  
(FRIAR VOLANTINO VERDE, manuscript, *Trinitaria Assicurazione*, pp. 17-37 [Italian])

#### THE WONDER OF GUADALUPE

- ✓ "How is it possible that almost 500 years ago someone could have painted such a huge image in such a small space, smaller than a square centimeter?...The chemist Richard Kuhn (Nobel prize winner in 1938) examined a red fiber and a yellow fiber. The result was astounding: he did not find a single trace of pigment – neither vegetable, animal, nor mineral..."  
(FRIAR VOLANTINO VERDE, manuscript, *Trinitaria Assicurazione*, quarta di copertina ; Cf. pp. 39-50 [Italian]).

#### THE STORY OF THE MECHANIC AND THE COW...

- ✓ "One night, a mechanic saw in a dream that he was test driving a client's car and was going fairly fast on a street that he knew. At a certain point, he suddenly saw a cow on the street and did not have time to brake – and woke up with a start! The same day, he went to test drive a client's car and found himself in the same street that he had seen in the dream. Remembering the dream, he started slowing down...and right then he suddenly saw a cow on the street and was able to avoid the accident – and, at the same time, found a more certain faith in God."  
(AN ITALIAN MECHANIC, in: LITTLE FRIARS AND LITTLE NUNS OF JESUS AND MARY, *Work in progress*)

#### THE GLORIOUS VISION OF FRIAR VOLANTINO AND, SIX MONTHS LATER, THE SURPRISING HOMILY OF A PRIEST...

- ✓ *Work in progress* (Cf. LITTLE FRIARS AND LITTLE NUNS OF JESUS AND MARY, in: <https://vimeo.com/41323927> [28 April 2017]; FRA VOLANTINO VERDE, *La testimonianza breve di un povero fraticello*, p. 2, in: <http://www.piccolifratiesorelledigesuemaria.net/1%20%20Fr%20Volantino.pdf> [28 April 2017] [Italian]).

#### THE STORY OF THE DESERT FATHERS: THE YOUNG MAN WHO HAD TO SEARCH FOR GOD LIKE THE AIR HE BREATHED...

- ✓ “A disciple went to his master and said: ‘Master, I want to find God.’ The master smiled; and, as it was very warm, he invited the young man to the river for a swim. The young man jumped in, as did the master. Then the master seized the disciple and held him under the water. He struggled for a few moments, until the master let him come back up. The master asked him what he had desired most while he was under the water. ‘Air,’ the disciple responded. ‘Do you desire God in the same way?’ the master asked. ‘If you desire Him that way, you will not fail to find Him.’ But if you do not have this most ardent thirst within you, your efforts and your books will be for nothing. You cannot find faith if you do not long for it the way you long for the air you breathe.”

(cf. DON BRUNO FERRERO, *Esercizi spirituali*, n. 62, *Come trovare Dio*, dagli *Apoftegmi dei Padri del deserto*, in <https://www.google.it/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwj5vMSEq9vTAhWILhoKHVlWBEOQFggwMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.portaleirc.it%2Fattachments%2Farticle%2F107%2FEsercizi%2520spirituali.doc&usq=AFQjCNEpNlj3C-Aosp5vx2019IZM7tT01Q&sig2=5cCKC46QeEcopSfKTF29Bw> [6 maggio 2017] [unpublished translation by pfgsm]).

#### THE MAN WHO REFLECTED ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD THROUGH SO MANY YOUNG LIVES GIVEN TO THE LORD...

- ✓ *Work in progress*

#### DIG AND DIG, AND YOU WILL FIND A TREASURE...

- ✓ *Work in progress*

(Cf. FRIAR VOLANTINO VERDE, manuscript, “*Sacred*” *Driver’s Manual of the Christian*, 2003, p. 7)

#### EXAMPLE OF THE ORANGE, THE INTELLIGENT MAN, AND THE EARTH WHICH LACKS INTELLIGENCE...

- ✓ *Work in progress*

#### EXAMPLE OF THE CHAIR (OR THE THEORY OF INTELLIGENT DESIGN)

- ✓ *Work in progress*

#### THE STORY OF THE OLD MAN OF THE VILLA IN NOTO, WHEN SOME BROTHERS WERE HITCHHIKING TO AVOLA

- ✓ *Work in progress*

## Famous People

#### THE REGULARITY, BEAUTY, AND ORDER OF NATURE TESTIFIES TO THEIR INTELLIGENT SOURCE

- ✓ **MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO** (Roman lawyer, politician, writer, orator, and philosopher; 106 BC – 43 BC): reporting the words of a Stoic with whom he was discussing, he writes that as one of the reasons that attests to the existence of the gods “he names the *uniformity of motion, the revolutions of the heavens, the grouping of the sun, and moon, and all the stars, their serviceableness, beauty, and order, the mere appearance of which things would be a sufficient indication that they were not the result of chance.* Just as a man going into a house, or gymnasium, or market-place, would find it impossible, when he saw the plan, and scale, and arrangement of everything, to suppose that these things came into being uncaused, but would understand that there was some one who superintended and was obeyed, so in the case of such vast movements and alternations, in the orderly succession of phenomena so numerous and so mighty, in which the measureless and infinite extent of past time has never deceived expectation, it is much more inevitable that he should **conclude that such great operations of nature are directed by some intelligence.**”

(CICERO, *De natura deorum*, II.5, Trans. Francis Brooks. London: Methuen, 1896.

<https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/cicero-on-the-nature-of-the-gods> [accessed 10/29/2019])

#### THE ARTIFICER WHO IS ABLE TO DO WHAT MAN CANNOT SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED AS THE DIVINITY

- ✓ *"If ([Chrysippus] says) there be something in the world that man's mind and human reason, strength and power are incapable of producing, that which produces it must necessarily be superior to man; ...[and] what better name is there for this than "god"? ...Again, if you see a spacious and beautiful house, you could not be induced to believe, even though you could not see its master, that it was built by mice and weasels..."*  
(CICERO, *De natura deorum*, II.16, Loeb Classical Library (1933).  
[http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cicero/de\\_Natura\\_Deorum/2A\\*.html](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cicero/de_Natura_Deorum/2A*.html)  
[accessed 10/29/2019])

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## CONCLUSION:

### STORIES

#### THE STORY OF THE TWO SCIENTISTS AND THE MODEL OF THE UNIVERSE...

- ✓ *Someone recounts: "One day, two scientists were walking around in nature. The first scientist, who was a believer, was amazed before the order, the grandiose regularity, and the beauty of the created world and praised the artistry and genius of the One who was at the origin of all this. His colleague, who was not a believer, told him that there was no author of all this but that it had come about by chance. ...The two scientists concluded their walk both remaining with their initial opinion. After a little time, the believing scientist invited the nonbelieving scientist to his house and led him to a huge warehouse. Coming to the front of the warehouse, he had him close his eyes and enter, then turned on a motor and told him to open his eyes. The unbelieving scientist saw a huge model of part of the universe, with many planets that rotated at different speeds and angles, surrounded by various stars of varying size, and every star and every planet turned around itself. ...The nonbelieving scientist was amazed and said that it was done very well, and asked his colleague, 'Wow! Did you make all this?' And he responded, 'Who knows, maybe it all just happened by chance...' And the nonbelieving scientist responded, 'What, are trying to make a fool of me?' So the believing scientist said: 'you say I'm making a fool of you when I tell you that maybe a simple model was made by chance...and you don't think that you're making a fool of yourself when you say that the original, that is, the entire universe, came about by chance?!'"*

(Cf. *Work in Progress*)

#### THE STORY OF THE BARBER REGARDING THE EXISTENCE OF GOD...

- ✓ *"A man went to the barber to have his beard and hair cut. As often happens in these cases, the people present started to talk among themselves, expressing their opinions on various subjects. At a certain point, the barber said, 'I don't believe that GOD exists.'  
- 'Why do you think that?,' the client asked.  
- 'It's enough to go out into the street to realize that GOD doesn't exist. If GOD existed, would there be so much evil? Would there be so many desperate people? No. If He existed, there would not be suffering, or so much sadness for humanity. I can't believe that a GOD existed who would allow all these terrible things.'  
The client did not want to respond hastily, and when the barber finished, he left the business. Once outside, he saw on the barber's street a man with a disheveled beard and very long hair. So he went back inside the barber's shop and said, 'Do you know something? Barbers don't exist!' - 'What do you mean, barbers don't exist?,' the barber demanded - 'Then what am I?' - 'Sure, they don't exist,' the client said. 'They don't exist, because if they did exist, there wouldn't be people with disheveled hair and long beards, like the man I just saw on the street!' - 'Oh, no!' the barber responded. 'Barbers exist, and woe to the people who don't come to me!' - 'Exactly!' the client said. 'That's the point. GOD exists! What happens is that people don't look for Him, and for this reason they remain in their sadness and their suffering!'"*  
(Cf. MADDALENA NEGRI, *Dio e il barbiere*, (13 Maggio 2010), in <https://www.sullastradadiemmaus.it/l-eclissi-della-luna/724-dio-e-il-barbiere> [22 aprile 2017] [unpublished translation by pfgm])

IN SUMMARY:

- ✓ The intellect is a gift of the Holy Spirit (Cf. Is 11), and should be used sensibly ....
- ✓ In summary, read and give the Green Flyer:

*“Pilgrim, remember that you are born and you die to do two things:*

*BELIEVE IN GOD (cf. Heb 11:6; Rom 10:14) AND gradually DO HIS WILL (cf. Matt 7:21; 1Thess 4:3).  
Everything else is vanity! (cf. Eccl 1:2; Luke 10:38-42)*

*“Pilgrim, remember...*

*THIS IS NOT THE TRUE LIFE, BUT ONLY THE TEST (cf. Deut 8:2-3; 1Pet 1:6-7),*

*and given that it only comes once in all eternity, let's make the most of it...*

*and we will have “the most” for all eternity! (cf. Gal 6:7-8) Amen!”*

(FRIAR VOLANTINO VERDE, *Green Flyer*, in: <http://nuke.fratipoveri.net/Default.aspx?tabid=157> [Italian])

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**NB.** In regards to all the passages that we did not read or explain: if you are interested in having a deeper knowledge of the topic, according to God, the Church, and experience, you can make an appointment with us at the end of the catechesis or by email and we will do what we can (even come to your house, if possible!). All we have to do is agree on the details and gather some people who are thirsty for the truth. You can find the email at: [www.poorfriars.net](http://www.poorfriars.net). – with Christian affection, the “Little Friars of Jesus and Mary”