Finding God in Christmas

Many years ago, in the early years of the ecumenical movement, KING TV in Seattle hosted a weekly televised discussion among a Catholic priest, Fr. William Tracy, a rabbi, Joseph Levine, and one of a series of rotating Protestant ministers. During one Christmas season the priest and the minister had taken over the discussion to the point that Rabbi Levine was becoming a part of the audience. The two were bemoaning at length the increasing secularization of Christmas. Finally, Rabbi Levine, in his wry Jewish way, intervened saying, “Gentlemen, gentlemen, take it easy; the economy benefits from the seasonal boost.”

Is God in the economy? As an economist and a priest, I don’t see why not. After all, we Jesuits are taught to find God in all things.

God comes to us in many ways. We don’t have to go searching; that can become spiritually and emotionally exhausting and frustrating. It is really a matter of recognizing God and developing an habitual awareness of how God’s grace works in and with us – through creation, through other people, even in the course of carrying out our work. We can be reminded of his presence in our co-workers as we attend the holiday parties and release the stress of the work day. I’ve even gotten into the habit of saying a little prayer of thanks to the Lord and to St. Anthony when I find a parking place in a crowded part of town. (St. Anthony is the patron saint of finding lost things. Even though I had not really lost the parking place, he seems to be good at helping me find one.)

God is present in the depths of our being and all around us. Listen deeply and you will hear; look deeply and you will see.