



Hope in the Mysteries of God

By definition mystery is inherent in all religion because it acknowledges belief in a power/person outside ourselves. All religious people accept the limitations of humankind and call upon something/someone beyond themselves.

On a lower level, human *need and desire* are the driving forces behind religious practice. On a higher level *devotion* becomes an integral part of this religious phenomenon.

Devotion is our inner response to that power/person that we sense to be present and operative. We feel a pull upon our inner selves, our hearts, our spirits in response to our awareness of this power/person whom we have come to call God. We are moved by feelings of awe.

Devotion is by its very nature private and personal because it is an interior experience. It is purely spiritual. However, if nurtured it will erupt into expressions of worship that are communal. In our case we have congregational worship

in which we come together to express our devotion to God.

Corporate worship has its own mystique in that the whole becomes much more than the sum of its parts. It is more than the collection of many people expressing their personal devotion. When-ever people of God come together to worship a field of energy is created by the coupling of multiple individual spirits with the Holy Spirit that produces and releases tremendous spiritual energy. It is this spiritual energy that empowers our lives for living daily in positive, satisfying and productive ways. It ties us into the source of all life and life's sustaining power.

We can certainly live apart from this communal spiritual oasis of worship and still have productive lives. However, it is like not hitting on all cylinders when driving down the road in an automobile.

Corporate worship can sometimes be disappointing, spiritless and lacking in spiritual nutrients. However, thanks to Sacramental Worship there is always something present that makes it worthy of our participation: the Presence of the Holy One—the object of our devotion and life's ultimate mystery.

