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Selfies

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Selfies

Many people use small digital cameras to take pictures of themselves or also with other people, or with backgrounds, so that they can readily share their recent experiences with friends, family members and colleagues. Selfies are candid, informal photographs, not carefully arranged portraits, so their significance is not derived from the art of photographic composition, but corresponds with the joy, interest or practical uses of capturing particular moments or events and being able to share them or to keep a visible record of them.

For all the selfie snapshots people have made of themselves with some famous persons, none have claimed to have captured their face and God's on their cameras, cell phones or other devices. But, upon reflection, perhaps we might recognize that all selfies do reveal the face of God, and do so in a manner that is even better than when we look in a mirror. When we gaze into a mirror, we can easily make adjustments to our appearance, while the click of a camera captures a particular moment, with its own spontaneous expressions and characteristics. We are more likely to reveal the image of God in our faces when we are being ourselves in the moment, rather than when we focus attention on our physical appearance or carefully choose a dignified demeanor.

If we are not entirely comfortable with thinking of our own face as somehow being a true image of God, we might at least acknowledge that our face is that of someone whom God treasures, to whom God is giving the gift of life right now, life that is intended never to end. The times, especially our unguarded spontaneous moments when we are not thinking about what someone else might think about us, are the times when we are closest to the way God sees us and loves us. When our concern is the opinions that others have of us, mostly imaginary on our part, we are usually in a self-conscious mode that encloses us within ourselves. God loves us as we are, not as we think we should be, and certainly not according to the image of ourselves that we think might be in the minds of others.

Every metaphorical selfie, which includes all the times when we are thinking, speaking and acting without reference to the approval of others, reveals at least some authentic aspects of ourselves, whether positive or the opposite. We know ourselves, and are known by others, as capable of spontaneous and even habitual behavior that is often, but not always, in keeping with our values. But no matter how we think, act and speak when we do so truly on our own, we are more likely to receive and even accept suggestions and inspirations that God gives us for making better choices. When we dismiss as false the thoughts that our self-worth is somehow dependent on the

opinions of others, we become more attentive to our own growth and development according to the unique set of characteristics that are a part of God's gifts to us, and we take appropriate responsibility for the direction of our lives.

The spirituality of selfies: God is in the pictures.