

Living on a rotating rock eight light minutes from the nearest star

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We haven't even caught up with Galileo. How pitiful is that? It's been 400 years since scientists learned that the earth rotates around the sun, and yet we talk and act like we don't know this fact. Our language—the sun “set” and “rose” -- still keeps reflecting the outdated and illusory view that the sun is moving around the earth. Thus our consciousness is stuck there, depriving us of a real and exciting engagement with the planet as it really is.

Science has given us a whole new understanding of what the cosmos, including the Earth, is really like, but it seems to remain only head knowledge, and not even very much of that. It's really curious that most people don't know and don't care about the explosion of new knowledge regarding the universe. We seem to have a collective autism that keeps us in a self-centered cocoon, oblivious to the wider wonders of our cosmic home. We Catholics say that creation reveals God, so you'd think we'd be drinking up every drop of knowledge about creation so we can know God better, but sadly that is not the case.

I believe that our spiritual lives would be vastly enriched if we saw past the illusions and tried to live on the real planet. I'm suggesting that we be intentional about trying to experience what is really going on. For instance, instead of taking dawn and dusk for granted, let's enter into communion with this immense ball that is slowly turning toward or away from the sun. It will awaken us anew to the wonder and wisdom of the Earth's daily rotation that provides the perfect amount of light and darkness.

Let's look at the stars and feel ourselves looking down rather than up. Let's experience earth's perfect gravity pulling on us, holding us in its embrace, keeping us from flying off into space. Let's be aware that we are zipping through space at 67,000 miles an hour. Let's acknowledge that the light and warmth of this spring day took eight minutes to get here from the sun, and is the result of the sun consuming four million tons of itself every second.

I believe that God is calling us to develop a spiritual sight that sees beyond the deceptions of the physical. If we stay locked in appearances, our sense of separation, loneliness, and supremacy intensifies, resulting in further desecration of the natural world. However, contemplation and experience of cosmic reality that isn't immediately obvious, can deepen our faith and of love for the Creator hidden there. If we do this as an act of prayer, we'll move closer to our true identity as one with creation, as partners with all of creation who love rather than destroy what God has made.

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