

(Lk10:17-24) There are two different ways that we can gain knowledge about an unfamiliar person; we can study him from a distance or we can converse with him in person. Studied observation might incline me to join someone's fan club but frequent dialogue can actually make me his friend. While dialogue is personal, study is highly impersonal. I might observe another's actions, but my best guess as to his secret intentions is woefully superficial. I cannot break through the impenetrable barrier surrounding the inner sanctuary of his ego from whence he alone scrutinizes his inner thoughts. Through dialogue, however, I can actually pass through the impossible barrier that separates self from others – thereby gaining access to his crucial point of view. After seeing his actions, I needn't speculate any longer about his secret intentions. He himself can reveal these to me. Should he be especially candid, I might eventually see him as he sees himself.

Faith is what empowers me to pass through the otherwise impenetrable self-knowledge barrier and see the world through another's eyes. To accomplish this trick, I must believe what he says about himself without actually seeing it for myself – without having the absolute proof that alone satisfies human reason. Although blindfolded, faith allows herself to be led around by the hand. Reason, for her part, must always lead. She refuses to take one baby step further than she herself can see. Therefore, where faith is concerned, the humble excel, whereas the wise excel at study. After noting that Jesus' unlettered apostles "were not quick learners," one commentator then facetiously remarked, "If only Jesus had chosen 12 scribes!" (Sheed, TKCJ, p.208) Scribes indeed! They were the ones who displayed the least faith in Him. Little wonder, then, that in today's gospel, our Lord exclaimed, "I give you praise, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and learned you have revealed them to the childlike."

Just as there are two ways to know our fellowman – either from the outside via reason or from the inside via human faith – so too can we gain knowledge about God through reason or divine faith. Reason apprehends God from without whereas faith sees God through His own eyes. Through reason we can learn what God is; through faith we also learn who God is: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Reason apprehends God's shadow, faith in turn tells us that Mary's Child is the Son of God whom many prophets and kings desired to see and hear, but did not. Through reason alone, one of the wisest men on earth, namely Aristotle, discovered many incredible things about God. Nevertheless, it was the humblest maiden on earth, Mary Immaculate, who made the intangible God our blood brother. If the inner life of our fellow human being is impenetrable without human faith, how much more impenetrable must the inner life of God be without divine faith! The meekest maiden did what the world's wisest could not accomplish. Her humble prayers brought down the insurmountable

knowledge barrier that separated God from man thereby inaugurating nonstop service to heaven for tried and true members of Holy Mother Church's loyalty program! So be it! Amen!