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Catholic Studies Capstone Project
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Finding the Heart of God in All Things: A Multifaith Invitation

Over the course of my studies at Loyola University Chicago, the Catholic Studies Minor has taught me one consistent lesson: the value of Finding God in All Things. In the Ignatian tradition, the sacred and profane manifest themselves as the full and whole presence of the Divine. In the Catholic tradition, the incarnation of Christ represents this idea in its fullness. Embracing this value meant recognizing that it does not mean that one brings God to their activities or passions. Rather, through discernment, whatever your deepest desire may be, God is already present in it. In my reflection, I asked myself three primary questions: what is a need in the world, what is a gift God provided me, and where do the two intersect? I discovered this through a combination of classes, academic engagements, and moments of growth.

In our world today, religious plurality challenges us to accept the Second Vatican Council's declaration of *Nostrae Aetate* (In Our Time). In issuing this papal encyclical, Pope Paul VI invited Catholics around the world to embrace their non-Christians neighbors in their own unique forms. As grandiose as this calling remains, I took it to venture into non-Christian religious groups on campus, immersing myself with Muslim, Hindu, and Jewish student organizations. My goal centered on encounter, solidarity, presence, and deep appreciation and exchange. I engaged in all these activities to answer the questions I posed to myself. I saw a need in the world to dispel hatred based on fear of "other" groups by learning to encounter my non-Christian neighbors. I possessed a gift to witness the beauty of their tradition and experiences in their wholeness. I saw a need in incorporating my Catholic conscience for peace to address a need of understanding. As we encounter our neighbors, plurality invites us to recognize God's presence in them.

One primary form of expression I utilized throughout my life centered on rap and hip-hop culture. At its core, hip-hop taught me to value converging influences of a unique cultural upbringing and my thirst for knowledge. In this song, I offer my appreciation to everyone who helped me build a home away from home in a multi-faith spirituality. At the same time, I spell out my desire to encounter others. Hip-hop provided me a platform to produce a simple song to the tune of Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio's (Bad Bunny) song Corazon (heart). I hope to convey my ideas and inspire you to ask where can you find God if God resides in all things?

Yeh

Gracias

Gracias, ey

From Palau to Chicago and every place between

Since I showed up at Loyola, coolest thing I'd seen

More clubs than I could've imagined

New avenues of faith that

I couldn't manage

Church, Temple, and Mosque and more

Thank you to the prayer rooms and meditation spaces

Jumma, events and all those happy faces

Although a times they all don't get me and things i can't explain

Feeling different always with special ways of engaging

But it always feelin deep n doin it without playing

Coming a long way from the altar, robes, and bells

Taking it all in, the Divine and all just fell

What is that I seek you ask,

Find God in all things most important task

To me that means it's hide and seek and God already beat you

Joining in the clubs without being a preacher

Hillel, MSA, HSO, and Weekly Jesuit meet ups

I thought it was cool,

new Holy Books and a new page

Attending retreats and new thoughts to engage

For my moments of desolation

To console me in new ways

My flow, pouring fast Ey

Didn't say I know it all, I didn't say im great

yeah just going with the flow, Just wanna learn to pray,
All my friends just sayin an "Okey", ey
What's cooler than this I thought
If the prophets and thinkers find ways to grow
Then God was just showing me a new way to flow
A cool break, a new way to live for others
Approaching the end of one journey,
waiting for another
Doing it for the greater glory all,
One Planner with many rewards earned
And I find myself in places with so much learned
For the research, seminars, events, and classes
I took away more than just my hope of passes
Thank you CS for the space to grow
Too many lessons that I still can't let go
Thank you Ministry and all your valuable time
Thank you for for showing space and how to make it mine
Thank you all and I hope to be able to go
Remember all those firsts and lasts that inform
For now a simple thank you and wishing you well
Seeing all these gifts from Heaven they just fell