

God Moments: Stories that Inspire, Moments to Remember

Michele Elena Bondi

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Even devout believers sometimes feel that God remains somewhere far away, distant and uninvolved in their daily lives. But, as Michele Elena Bondi suggests in her book *God Moments*, God draws near in everyday situations. When one opens one's eyes, one can see God at work—providing, caring, and teaching.

In a collection of short devotional stories, Bondi and her fellow contributors share how mundane activities such as cooking, helping at a child's school, or even doing laundry may become opportunities for God to speak into a life. A leaky washing machine, for example, tries her patience, but ultimately teaches her to see God's gifts; frustrated attempts to donate toys ultimately show her that God works when she cooperates with his plans. These "God moments" may challenge, encourage, or simply teach. And they may come through friends, animals, saints, unexpected events, or everyday miracles.

Bondi begins by sharing how God works in little things, but she gradually reveals how he is near during the trials of life, such as when life-long dreams are dashed, a loved one dies, or one faces a serious illness. These "God moments" are not trivial. And, Bondi says, while God certainly shows up during religious services, unless one watches and listens for God at work throughout each day, one will miss many lessons and lose an intimate connection with him. Bondi gently urges readers to realize that God longs for real relationship, not just rote religious service or knowledge.

A psychologist, Bondi has published several articles and books, all rooted in her deep Catholic faith. Her writing reflects her calling as a mother and her passion for her faith, both of which make this book accessible. The stories all come from her real-life experiences or those of her fellow contributors. The breadth of stories and writers not only ensure that the book will be relatable to a number of readers, but also demonstrates that Bondi's main message can prove true in believer's life.

Catholics like Bondi will be inspired and challenged by this book, which celebrates the intimate faith many adherents crave. But because the book assumes familiarity with the Catholic tradition, non-Catholics may find occasional references to Catholic dogma and ritual a slight stumbling block. However, any Christian believer uninhibited by Catholic theology will also appreciate this discovery of God in the everyday.

DIANE GARDNER (November 1, 2010)

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