

A View from the Pew

by Deacon Greg Kandra

What Do You Believe?

The scientific website *Edge.org* once posed this question to various creative thinkers: “What do you believe is true even though you cannot prove it?” Some provocative answers were published some time ago in *The New York Times*.

Psychologist Roger Schank said: “Irrational choices. I do not believe that people are capable of rational thought when it comes to making decisions in their own lives.”

Physicist Kenneth Ford replied: “I believe that microbial life exists elsewhere in our galaxy.”

Neuroscientist Joseph LeDoux answered: “I believe that animals have feelings and other states of consciousness, but neither I nor anyone else has been able to prove it.”

Psychologist David Myers replied that “one, there is a God, and two, it’s not me—and it’s also not you.”

Another psychologist, David Buss, summed it all up simply and eloquently in just two words: “True love.”

I wonder about those things we cannot see but which we know in our hearts are true. Scientists measure the world by beakers and liters. They spread it on a dissecting table, pinned and tagged, and peel apart its skin. But some things just can’t be scrutinized or categorized—things that just can’t be proved. Things like faith.

Two thousand years ago a man who was not a scientist but merely a humble tentmaker wrote that “faith is the evidence of things not seen.” In other words, it cannot be rationalized.

All this has made me ask myself: What do I believe is true? What do I know is real, even without the burden of proof? Certainly, I believe in God, and His Son, and His steadfast devotion to us, unworthy though we may be. But what else?

Well, I believe in the sincerity of children and the loyalty of dogs. I believe in looking out the window when I’m riding on a bus. I believe in writing in ink. I believe in Tilt-A-Whirls and roller coasters. I believe laughter really is the best medicine, and a good cry can help, too. I believe there is nothing more potent, tender, or meaningful than a well-timed hug. I believe in long naps on rainy Sunday afternoons.

I believe that somehow there is a divine reason for eclipses and eruptions, for tsunamis and suicide bombers. I believe in grace. I believe in possibility and in heeding the whispering voice that calls all of us to be better than we are.

And I believe, passionately, that God has a plan for each of us.

I can’t prove it. I can’t put it in fluid and keep it in a jar. But I know it’s true. I just know it, in my bones.

I suspect that is fundamental to who we are. We need to make these leaps of faith—to keep our eyes on the stars when the waters around us are rising.

At times it is almost impossible, and the heart breaks from the effort. Yet something—or Someone—keeps us going. Believe it or not.

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