

From: *Finding God in All Things: Contemplation, Intercession, and Intervention*

Most people of our faith tradition have long accepted the value of the social sciences. A one-time president of Notre Dame, Theodore Hesburgh, made the point this way: “There is no conflict between science and theology, except where there is bad science or bad theology.” The primary thing we can do if we are to make good use of the social sciences in the church’s life is to have a stance, and matching practices, grounded in radical orthodoxy and prayer.

An example can be seen in the life of Robert N. Bellah. He was both a social scientist and a devout Anglo-Catholic. A Jesuit friend wrote this about him.

I esteem him as, perhaps, the most deeply and authentically spiritual person I have ever known. Robert Bellah taught me that Christianity is essentially a longing, an unslakable thirst for living water in the sense of John’s gospel, a profound hunger for the signs of God’s presence. Bob also taught me that the holy mystery lies both veiled and yet betrayed in every human event, person, tradition and institution. He challenged me to become more truly Catholic than I have ever yet been. I know now that the only obstacle to God’s deepened presence in my life is me—my complacency, my mediocrity, my too literalist expectations about where God can be found and how. Through Bob I came to be convinced that a serious outreach to other spiritual traditions besides my own is necessary if I wish to discover the meaning and validity of the Jesuit tradition for our own time. Indeed, through him I came for the first time to understand the Ignatian thrust to find God in all things—not to project him but to find him—and to seek to find him truly in all things.

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