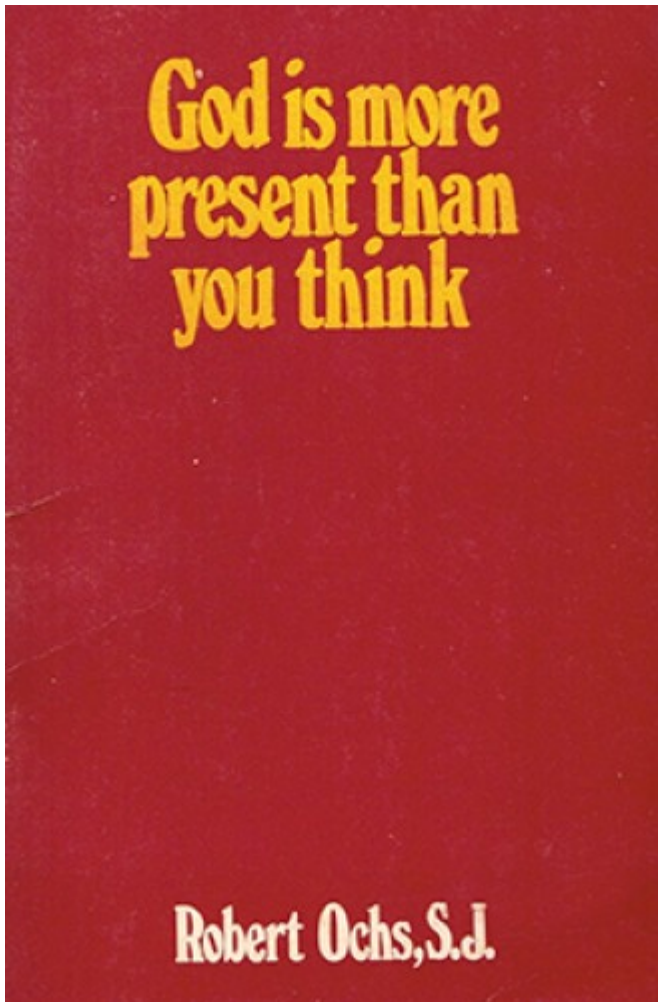


Discerning desire

by [Marilyn McEntyre](#) in the [April 29, 2015](#) issue

In Review



God Is More Present Than You Think

by Robert Ochs, SJ
Paulist Press

I was 29, agonizing over a decision, when my faith took a consequential turn. Seeking God's will wasn't yielding clarity and was exhausting even my will to pray. A friend finally stopped me in the midst of my angst and asked, "What do you *want*?" I

suddenly realized how conditioned I had been to disregard that question, putting oughts before wishes and self-sacrifice before self-satisfaction. I had come to a dead-end on the road marked "Selflessness," but I hesitated to claim the self who wanted, resisted, claimed. A notion of godliness that cast suspicion on all "worldly" pleasures had mired me in chronic ambivalence.

As God would have it, soon thereafter I came upon a little book by Robert Ochs, SJ, *God Is More Present Than You Think*. I read, "Discerning the will of God is not divorced from discerning one's own wishes, but the same process." Ochs shows how the Spirit may work through our deepest desires, which led me to a new reading of the promise, "Delight yourself in the Lord: and he will give you the desires of your heart": the desires themselves are a gift. It seems we are meant, after all, to take delight in dappled things.