Columns
Spirituality



"Being consciously in God’s presence is not only possible when I sit in prayer, but also when I practice seeing the goodness of God in everything around me," Teresa Anyabuike writes. (Courtesy of Teresa Anyabuike)



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Being in God's presence moment by moment is the most fulfilling experience I've ever had. It is hard to describe or express. One can be calm and at peace even in the midst of disturbing moments — not that you don't feel unease about it, but you just won't allow your feeling to take over.

I believe it's all God's grace in action when I permit God to take charge of the situation. Being consciously in God's presence is not only possible when I sit in prayer, but also when I practice seeing the goodness of God in everything around me — whether I'm walking, working or sitting. This might sound difficult, but it is possible.

In everything I do, if mercy, love and compassion are missing, then I am not dwelling in God's presence nor being aware of God's abiding presence in my life and the lives of others. I must exhibit mercy in dealing with my sisters and brothers. That is one of the ways to see God in them.

In everything I do, wherever I find myself, I can create a peaceful atmosphere. The energy I use to practice this attitude of godliness is insignificant, compared with the muscles or energy I use in showcasing negative attitudes within and around me. *How good it is for sisters and brothers to dwell together as one* (Psalm 133:1).

I try to be consciously aware of and dwell in God's presence in my daily encounters with myself, my sisters and brothers, and with all of creation. When I meet someone, I pray silently in my heart, asking God to help me see the beauty of God's presence in the person. So, relating with that individual will be awesome and wonderful.

We can actually grow in being in the presence of God, and being consciously aware that God is dwelling in us. We can be in touch with our feelings and open up space in us for God to fill. Once I realize that God dwells in me and I'm constantly in God's presence, my attitude towards my sisters and brothers will be that of love, joy, compassion and patience.

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Recently a security guard was sharing with me about the working conditions in his work place. I sympathized with him because there was no compassion in the conditions he described to me: His work does not have a human face. I wished that his company had compassionate conditions for their workers; it would have gone a long way toward putting a smile on the face of the security guard.

Sometimes the working conditions in our own establishments lack a human face, and it may be difficult for our workers to experience God's presence working with us. These conditions need to be reviewed: If our staff is not happy working with us, but have to work because jobs are not easy to come by, we must be concerned. We must exercise charity and learn why they are not happy working. Our workers ought to find God through their work for us, and the working conditions we provide for them ought to reflect God.

I feel concerned about the expressions on the faces of my sisters in the community and those with whom I work. When I notice that their facial expressions have changed from what I knew previously, I try to find out why. I believe we are all companions on a journey and we need to look out for one another, even though sometimes it might be seen as not minding one's own business. No matter how it is interpreted, we are our sisters' and brothers' keepers. Just find a gentle way to care for one another.

Once when I was returning from a journey, I saw a little Muslim girl trying to cross the road. I could see how hard it was for her because of the moving vehicles. I simply asked her if she needed help and she nodded her head. I held her hand and helped her cross the road. You could see the smile on her face. I was happy I helped her because I saw God in her.

There's no limit to the kindness we should show to one another. It is a daily struggle for me, especially when I am hurt when I try to show love and compassion. But I fall on my knees in God's presence to help me do good at all times, as St. Julie Billiart found the goodness of God in all events of her life.