Voices of Sisters



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Finding God in everyday life is both a gift and a task. For me, in this recent time, that encounter has happened in a particular way along the path I regularly take to the university. At first, I walked it quickly and in fear. I had been warned that it was dangerous, and I almost ran, looking straight ahead, trying to get to the subway station as fast as possible.

It has been a process. The invitations, both external and internal, received in class and in my personal and communal prayer, gradually turned my attention toward the path itself. Little by little, I began to dare to look, to contemplate the road, the faces and the details. I came upon a very painful reality that had always been there, but that I had never allowed myself to see: people lying on the street, sick, begging …

It began with one person. I decided to look him in the eyes, smile and greet him. He sat every day on the ground at the entrance to the pedestrian bridge leading to the subway station. One day, as I was about to enter the bridge, he looked at me and greeted me.

Then there was another man in a wheelchair. He had screws in his legs and seemed rough, even off-putting. I knew he was there, but I had never dared to really look at him. One day I decided to greet him, and as I was arriving at the subway, I found him stuck and unable to move because his wheelchair was jammed. I went over, helped him, looked at him, and when I smiled, I discovered a human face … a beautiful face.

And so more people began to appear along the way, or rather, I began to see them. They had always been there. It was difficult and, at the same time, beautiful. The people were the same, but I was truly seeing them now, and their faces appeared beautiful to me.

During Lent, in a special way, I decided to share my snack with the people I met along the way. I wanted to share it with a different person each day, and although at one point I thought I would eventually have to repeat people, that was not the case. I was surprised by how many people were living on the street, and by how deep the need was.

At first, when I approached, they looked at me with fear or as if I were a threat. Then, as I showed them what I wanted to share, their expressions changed. Some thanked me or smiled. They received what I shared like a child receives a gift.

Others ate what I offered almost immediately.

Sometimes I found people sleeping on the street or in building doorways, and I would leave the food beside them so they could find it when they woke up.

One time, something unexpected happened. I came across a man lying on the ground who looked very unwell. I stopped to offer him something to eat, but he refused. He smiled, thanked me, and did not accept it.

That day, many things went through my mind, my heart and my prayer. That man needed something different. Not simply food, but concrete answers to everything that had led him there. I thought about structural injustice, the many forms of poverty, all the people along the path, and how I might be able to help more

I recognized that what I was doing did not solve their problems. But I felt it could still be, at least, a small light.

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I also began to notice other people along the way: informal workers and others with simple jobs, whom I made a point of greeting each day. They work hard and spend the whole day on the street, many of them in the same place, trying to sell the little they have.

One woman always sits in the same spot with her small box of candy. Another is always on the corner with her young daughter. An older woman sells coffee and various small items. Another sweeps the street near the university. There is also an older man who sells candy, smiles, and wishes well to everyone who passes by.

All these people belong to what I have come to understand as the world of the working poor. Many times I found myself praying for them and, like the others, looking at them, greeting them, and smiling. At first, I thought I was restoring their humanity by seeing them, because so many people ignore them and pass by as if they did not exist. But I came to realize that they are the ones who restore mine.

It has been beautiful to recognize how much tenderness exists along the way, how many good and beautiful people there are, and to discover in their faces the face of God.

These experiences continue to invite me to open my eyes and disarm my gaze, learning to see anew. They invite me to let go of fear and prejudice in the way I see others. In a world marked by war, conflict and polarization, where it is becoming normal to see the other as something to possess or use, the invitation is to live the way of Jesus with coherence and simplicity.

That begins with learning to see differently, allowing each encounter to transform my heart. Only from this new way of seeing is it possible to look as he looked, with deep compassion; to stand before the sacred ground that is the other; to share bread and word; and to give and receive in the ordinary encounters of daily life. Like Jesus, we are called to walk through life doing good, seeking justice and sowing hope.