



Theological Imaginings: Presence to Self & Others

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Presence is God's gift to persons. Therefore, we as persons are gifted with God's presence both to ourselves and to one another. This God-given gift of presence is God Himself gracing us with His presence, sharing His divine presence in us and others. We manifest this presence when we are fully conscious about ourselves and those around us, whether interrelating with each other or just being aware of each other. I am present to myself if I recognize who I am and who I am dealing with. Likewise, with the other who is dealing with me. Therefore, we need to help each other recognize who each of us is to make us realize who we are with one another. Then, realizing who we are to each other we deal with each other with fairness and justice. Our faith tells us that the other is our neighbor whom God our loving Father commands us to love: "Love your neighbor as yourself".

The gospel tells us who our neighbor is. Jesus Christ presented the Parable of the Good Samaritan to the disciple who asked '...who is my neighbor?' It is a story of Mercy shared with the one in great need, whether one has an affiliation with the other or none, of which one may be a complete stranger or enemy to the other. Mercy, therefore, characterizes the relationship between self and the other. Mercy is the face of God between self and the other. Mercy is inclusive of everyone in need. Mercy presence relates or bridges self with the other whom God sends to us to be our neighbor.

God's abiding presence in love assures us of protection from all evil and harm. Thus, whatever anxieties we have, our faith in Him is challenged with response of trust and obedience that brings us to openness for service of mercy wherever and in whatever way we are needed. Our fourth vow as followers of Catherine McAuley who would always see the suffering of Jesus Our Lord in every cross form she saw on window panes is a call to service for the poor, sick and those in need of education. Therefore, our "HOLON" becomes authentically relevant wherever and in whatever way we manifest God's presence as Sisters of Mercy.