

Pastor's Column

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Prayer—Looking at Life Through God's Eyes

Recently Fr. Freddy D'Souza, a Capuchin priest from India who is presently ministering in Bahrain, came to visit me. We met several years ago when I led a pilgrimage to Dubai and Egypt.

It was his first visit to the United States. In his ten-day visit, I had the opportunity to show him around San Diego and do the "tourist thing." We saw many of the wonderful attractions that are available to us in "America's Finest City."

The days were relaxing not only for him, but also, for me. I am always amazed at what I feel and what I experience when I act as the "tour guide." San Diego looks so different. I see things again "as for the first time."

I am in the midst of this area day in and day out, but get caught up with Parish concerns, family concerns, and my own personal concerns, and lose sight of this beautiful locality in which we live. It takes another person, "from the outside," to visit and, somehow, I begin to look at the context in which I live in a fresh and new light.

As I begin to look at the area with the help of a tourist's eyes, I am more aware, once again, of my context. I see its beauty that I often neglect. I become more appreciative of my life and the wider world in which my life is lived. All my concerns, worries, and problems are then tempered by this wider context of life of which I am reminded.

This is what prayer is and does in our lives! If we invite God to be a guest in our lives, if we accept God's request to have a tour of our lives, if we act as the "tour guide" for God to see the context in which we live, we begin to look at our lives with a new and fresh pair of eyes.

Spending time with God in prayer helps us to see things again "as for the first time." We are reminded of the beauty of life, its fragility, and its shortness. The problems, concerns, and worries that we estimate to be so important and overwhelming are placed in the larger context of life. We find balance. We realize that we are not alone. Our concerns become manageable, sometimes even insignificant, as we look at the context of our life through God's eyes. We are reminded of what is really important. We are made aware, once again, of the bigger picture that life on earth is just one frame in the reel of eternal life with God.

God is the tourist who wants to visit you in the context in which you live. Invite God in! Give God a tour! You will see the people and the situations of your life again "as for the first time."

Fr. Mike