

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

*You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there  
is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures  
forevermore. **Psalm 16:11***

Lately I have been thinking about the glimpses of God's glory that can be seen when I am looking and listening for what God is doing around me.

St. Ignatius Loyola encouraged the practice of a form of prayer called Examen. The Examen consists of three questions: 1. Where did you sense joy today? (Joy corresponds to God's nearness.) 2. When did you feel far from God today? (This might indicate sin in your heart or a need to realign your priorities with God's) 3. What message is God speaking to you through your emotions? Asking these questions in a quiet place in God's presence helps us to see where we are in tune with God and where we are not. The point is to see ourselves and God's purposes more clearly.

Joy is a glimpse of God's glory, the sparkle of His handiwork in this world. I had the pleasure of seeing it at the October meeting of the Communicants' Class as 8th grade students and their mentors met to discuss what it means to follow Jesus. To see the joy on the faces of young and old(er) as they shared their experiences was for me a glimpse of what God is doing in our midst. Later in that class, Joyce Brolsma shared with the students how she learned to pray and how she keeps a notebook with her prayers recorded. She gave each student a similar notebook she had bought for them. As they saw the notebooks, the students' faces were lit up with joy that she had thought to do that for them. It was a pleasure for me to see God working in the interaction between the generations! I felt God's presence with us in that time.

Try praying through the questions of the Examen today. If you are praying in the morning, think over the events of the day before. Let your sense of nearness or farness from God speak to you and help you to hear God's voice.

**Rev. Elizabeth Nielsen**