

NBC Devotional
August 18, 2021
“Showing Up”

Her name is Ophania. She said her name means “to appear.” Please help me pray for her. She was my waitress on the road, today, and perhaps one of the main reasons I drew breath this morning.

Ophania is the mother of three children. Last year her firstborn, an 18-year-old son, was murdered. Her heart is obviously broken. As she wept unstoppable tears, I simply and sacredly listened and prayed and finally spoke tender words of care, life, and hope into her pain.

I left Ophania with the words of the Psalmist, 34:18: "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; He rescues those whose spirits are crushed." (And, yes, I also left her a generous cash tip in the amount of the Holy Spirit's choosing.)

I am not a hero. I am, however, a great and a grateful debtor, so, I basically breathe in and out to be found “showing up” in the lives of others -- all others -- as a humble carrier of the presence of Jesus.

Recently, the Lord inspired me as a traveling district superintendent to interact with every person I encounter as if each person is a member of my local parish. It has messed my life up in a marvelous way.

One of my favorite quotes is by John Wesley: “The world is my parish.” As I travel the many roads on the Philadelphia District Church of the Nazarene — eastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey — I am so glad I am not only a servant to the pastors and the churches, but have also been entrusted with other highly valued people cherished by God along my journey.

Indeed, my calling is to allow the presence of my God to wear me like a garment so that He might serve His hope and kindness to each soul I encounter. The lyrics written by Matt Mayer describe my joy-description: “Holiness is Christ in me.”

Yes, “showing up” as a sanctuary of His holy presence is the reason I live. Everything else is just detail. Like Ophania's name, Jesus calls me “to appear” in the lives of others. If I will simply show up, I believe He promises to profoundly show off.

I live moment-by-moment within this glorious burden as these seven words fan the flames of my existence nonstop: “Presence Matters Most. No Invisible People. Unity.”

Note: My last book published by The Foundry Publishing is also titled “Showing Up.”

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