

Where do we seek God's presence?

Under what circumstances do we see God's presence? Is it in life's storms and difficulties? Or is it in the soft sigh of a newborn child cuddled in his mother's arms?

Today's scripture readings give us a taste of both situations, perhaps most especially in the reading from the first book of Kings. We hear that Elijah had climbed Mt. Horeb – also known as Mt. Sinai – to take shelter.

Taking a peek at the verses in 1 Kings just before today's readings, we learn that Elijah was fleeing for his life from powerful rulers ... rulers that didn't want to hear what God had to say about their evil rule. Elijah sought out this mountain for safety just as the ancient Israelites had camped there after their harrowing escape from Pharaoh.

Elijah's mystical experience of God was not in those events popularly thought to describe divine power and to inspire awe, but rather in a tiny whispering sound. This subtle event instilled such profound awe in him that he hid his face and approached with great reverence.

Let's think about that just a moment.

Where do we expect to meet God?

In the power of an earthquake? Or a tsunami? How about in a flood or a forest fire? Or perhaps in a tornado, a hurricane ... or the majestic explosion of an erupting volcano?

Aren't those the things popularly known as "Acts of God"? I'll bet our insurance policies use those very words!

To be sure, God is in those dramatic events, but isn't a beautiful sunset also an "Act of God"?

Or the view of the Milky Way in the summer night sky?

Or the sprouting of the first daffodil in early spring?

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How many times have we heard people cry out "Where was God?" when something unexpected or terrible happened?

Yet how many times have we exclaimed "There's God!" when we witness something beautiful and stirring?

God is there. We just have to look.

Likewise, as Peter and the other disciples learned, when our lives have been tossed about like a boat in heavy seas, God is still there. As long as we have faith in Him, we are safe. But sometimes – let's be honest ... most times – **our** faith is lacking and **we**, like, Peter, start to sink ... sink in our own self-doubt and fear.

Yet God doesn't abandon us. We only have to accept His hand and he saves us. Instead of focusing on our own woes and worldly distractions, we should focus our whole attention on Jesus. Even though our faith may be weak, His is strong.

Though we may find ourselves sinking, if we reach out to Jesus, He will be there for us! We can look for Him in the silence ... or the roar of the ocean ... and reach out to Him in our fear and doubt.

He will **always** be there.