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Spiritual Formation

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### Reflections on God's Presence

This first time I spent my eight minutes in silence, I noticed many sounds around me. Cars outside. My father on the phone in his office. I had to train myself to ignore these. When I did, I began to perceive the warmth of the sun on my body. As I thought about this, I realized it is an example of God's presence in our lives and how His love gives us warmth in these scary times. I also realized that maybe my difficulty in finding a quiet place to meditate is also a symbol. It might be symbolic of how we have to work at perceiving God's presence in our lives. Too often we get distracted by the things going on around us and forget to take the time to let God enter our consciousness. I definitely came away from this experience with a new insight about welcoming God into our lives.

For my next reflection, I decided to sit outside. It was very peaceful there. I could hear the sounds of nature, birds chirping and wind rustling the leaves. I was watching squirrels and chipmunks gather nuts for the winter. This made me think about how God created the seasons and how there are seasons in our lives just as there are in the natural world. This reminded that the Bible talks about how for everything there is a season. These seasons are God's plan for us.

I found that focusing my quiet time could help me to perceive God's presence. One time I decided to think about things that I am grateful for. These past few months with Covid have been really hard. It's easy to lose sight of the good things in our lives. Some of the things that I included on my list are parents who support me, a brother who I can share things with, having

doctors who fixed my scoliosis this summer, my music instructors at Nyack who are devoted to me and their other students. This is just a partial list. I know that God graces us with many things that we should appreciate. These eight minutes gave me time to think about a few of them.

The experience of quiet reflection made me think about how often we fill our lives with noise and distractions like video games, or Instagram or television. I feel that this showed me the importance of making room in our lives to let God in.