

August 4, 2020

Nature is so **fascinating**; it can be experienced and expressed in many different ways. Reflecting **in** nature helps us **renew** ourselves. When I lived at St. Mary's, I would often see employees walking outside during their lunch break. Were they not being re-energized by creation?

Do you ever spend time in the evening or on weekends relaxing in nature—even 15 minutes? If not, why not treat yourself to this awesome experience? It can be so relaxing.

Nature teaches us so many things about God and ourselves. All we have to do is step outside to see it. Today, almost everyone is glued to their phone, either texting, emailing, tweeting, Facebook....ing, and missing out on so much! Have you ever left your phone home and gone for a walk? It's one of the most beautiful ways to see God while we're here on earth.

Nature can, also, give us an **insight** into **God's mind**, like a **painting** that reflects what the artist thinks. Such as:

- A **tree**, arms always outstretched, patient and willing to be a home to whomever is willing to land upon its solid branches, symbolizing the **kindness** of God and a **welcoming spirit**.
- The **rain**, always falling to support the world, symbolizing God's **mercy**.
- The **mountains** showing only the beginning of a vast picture of the **magnitude** of God.
- Nature is hinting at the next life to come, what will you do to find it?

So, how do we **plug** into our environment and reflect on it? First, we need to **unplug** from our **devices**. Choose a day—or even an hour—to spend time outside taking in the world around you: the **air** you breathe, the season's **colors** and features, the people and interactions around you, the **sounds** and **smells**—it's real life through your **senses**—not through an electronic device.

Now, might be a good time to **STOP** and thank God for your **five senses** which enable you to **see** and **enjoy** all the wonders of nature.

Another way to **appreciate** your surroundings is to **implement a no cell phone, computer, or TV rule for a day or few hours**, to save electric energy and your own energy.

Lord, I thank You for the gift of creation and the countless ways that You speak to me through that which You created.

Blessings on your nature walks.

