

The Spirituality of Presence in Retirement

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For over 300 combined years the six of us, who are now retired and living at the Villa de San Antonio, were busy about many things serving God's people through the years in our various ministries. When God called us into retirement some of us wondered how we would still be able to carry on the mission of being Presentation and bearing the charism through the witness of our lives. With God all things are possible. Here we are in an enclosed community of around 200 people most of whom are in their 80's, 90's and some in their 100's and guess what, we find ourselves still carrying on the mission!

Shortly after the three of us from San Bruno arrived in Villa de San Antonio and we were able to mingle, after fourteen days of quarantine, several of the residents, individually, approached us and thanked us for coming. Then they went on to tell us that the presence of the Sisters from Callaghan Road had made such a positive difference in the Villa community. Thanks to their "ministry of presence" we received a very warm welcome and now feel very much at home. We hope, we three, are also carrying on the ministry of presence in our interaction with the other residents, caregivers and other workers.



So what is the ministry of presence? What does it involve? Does it require skill training? How is it expressed? I believe the answer to all these questions is that the ministry of presence is an intangible entity which happens naturally when

one is focused on doing whatever it is one is called by God to do at the present moment. All it requires is an openness to being just who one is and sharing that with others while reaching out to and accepting the other. At our age there really is very little that we are able to do for others. Really all we can do is to be there.

We share this reflection with you because we want you to know that no matter where we are or how old, or physically weak we are, as daughters of Nano, we will always carry forward the mission of being Presentation, even if it is only through a smile, a greeting or just a nod of the head in recognition.