



Waiting, Expecting, Hoping...

By Fanny Pedraza

Waiting is not always easy for me. Even when I want to warm something in the microwave oven, 60 seconds feel like a long time!

Some days I tend to live in a hurry, to want to get things done right away—I want instant results. It's wanting to do my will, my way, now, and it reflects a selfish attitude on my part.

There is another type of waiting, such as when you are expecting someone's arrival, the celebration of a milestone, or the conclusion of a project. This type of waiting involves my emotions—it is connected with invested feelings, time or effort in accomplishing something. If my expectations are not met, I feel disappointed; if they are, I feel happy, satisfied.

Another kind of waiting comes to my mind: hoping. When I hope, I wait in happy expectation of something I dearly cherish. When I hope, I send my wishes to a higher Source, who reassures me that my desires will be fulfilled.

When I was a preteen my mother gave me a gold pendant with a cross, an anchor and a heart — the symbols of faith, hope and charity, she said. I could connect the cross with faith and the heart with love but what about the anchor?

Some months later one of my older brothers took me to an island where I saw — for the first time in my life — the owner of a small vessel throwing an anchor overboard, lowering it and making sure that it touched the seabed. My brother explained to me that the anchor was to keep the boat from drifting from that spot and prevent the waves from moving or damaging it.

At dusk, strong winds started blowing, and it rained hard. I could see the vessel moving sideways, but it never went under water or drifted away. It remained on the place its owner had anchored it with the firm assurance that it was going to be safe.

After my experience on the island, I understood that the anchor in my pendant represented not earthly things but spiritual ones. It is a symbol of the hope that makes me remain steady in stormy waters and maintains my soul sure and firm (Hebrews 6:19-20) by assuring me of God's continued love and protection. It is a symbol of a happy waiting and a faith-filled expectation.

For individual reflection:

Psalm 31:24—What is being asked from those who wait for, hope for and expect for? Psalm 147: 11—What does the word fear mean for you in this passage? Romans 5:5—Is your hope mixed with a fear of disappointment? Explain your answer to yourself.

Take time to share with your family

Take time to talk about what you feel when you wait for a plane to land, the school year to end, and the celebration of Christmas. How are these feelings similar? How do they differ?

What is your greatest hope in this life? What does God have to see with what you hope?

What is the connection between your faith and what you hope?

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