

Grace in the Knowing

by Frances Peacock



nce I found a world of grace in South Bend, Indiana. I entered that world when my mother began to lose her memory. It was a place of love and compassion, where many simple kindnesses were poured upon my mother.

We traveled around town, my mother and I, and wherever we went, we'd meet God's grace...

We went to the shopping center, where a man we didn't know lifted my mother's walker out of the car. He stood the walker up on the sidewalk, steadied it, and sent us on our way. *Grace in the lifting.*

We went to the doctor's office, where a woman held my mother's hand while I filled out forms. She told a

story about her crazy dog and made us laugh, and then she took off with a kiss and a wave. *Grace in the laughing.*

We went to a coffee shop, where our old neighbor, Mary, walked over to give Mom a hug and tell her it was great to see her. *Grace in the greeting.*

We went to Sacred Heart parish, where the priest remembered Mom from daily Mass and brought Communion over to our pew. *Grace in the remembering.*

We went to St. Anthony's parish, where we sat in the car. I told Mom she sent nine children to that school and she spent twenty years as a room mother. She asked how she ever managed all that. I said it was God's grace. *Grace in the mothering.*

We went to the statue of Our Lady, where we said a Memorare; and where I silently placed my mother in the Blessed Mother's loving arms. *Grace in the prayers.*

We went to my brother, John's house, where we sat in the kitchen and talked about grandchildren, weddings and new countertops. *Grace in the kitchen table.*

We went to the nursing home, where the staff cared for her. Where they laundered her cotton blouses and hung them on hangers. Where they spoon-fed her vanilla ice cream every afternoon.

Where they wheeled her to the phone at the nurses' station when one of her children called. Where they stacked her cards and letters in a lovely white basket on the table, next to her picture of St. Martin De Porres. *Grace in the details.*

On October 7, my mother passed away, and my world of grace shut like a window.

But grace hasn't gone away. Only that particular time of grace has ended, but I'll find grace again. After all, now I know what to look for:

I'll see it on the sidewalk in front of a children's hospital, where a mother takes her sick little boy for a ride in a red wagon.

I'll see it some morning on a street corner, where a father loads his child's wheelchair onto the handicapped bus.

I'll see it outside of a restaurant, where a waiter walks to the parking lot with a piece of pie a-la-mode and serves it to a frail old man who sits in the back seat of a car.

I'll see God's grace in ways I can't even imagine right now, but you can bet I'll see it.

And then it will be my turn: I'll hold open a door. I'll tell a funny story. I'll chase an old woman down the street to give her back the scarf she dropped, and I'll lay it upon her shoulders.

Yes, when that time comes, I'll know exactly what to do. It's something my mother taught me while we were going around town.

Grace in the knowing.



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