

Traveling Companion: A Lesson in Patience

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I dialed the toll-free phone number. I got the usual artificial voice greeting, both in English and Spanish. “Please listen to the following message. If you are interested in signing up for DSL service, please press 1. If you wish to add to your present DSL service, please press 2. If you need technical assistance, please press 3.” I pressed 3. “If you need help setting up your DSL, please press 1. If you are not receiving a dial tone, please press 2. If you need further technical assistance, please press 3.” I pressed 3 again. I was met with: “Please enter your telephone number, including your area code.” I did. A very deliberate, technical voice, reminded me, “You have entered..” and proceeded to enunciate the telephone number I had just entered. “If this is correct, press 1. If it is incorrect, press 0.” I pressed 1. The same mechanical voice asked me to hold on, indicating, “We are retrieving your records.” I waited a few more moments until it was safe to proceed. I was then informed, “All our technical representatives are busy right now helping customers. Your call is important to us. Please hold on the line and your call will be answered in the order it was received.” Then the music started. I wondered how long I would have to wait. I was shocked when, a few minutes later, I heard a human voice. He asked about my problem. I informed him. He asked if I had done certain things to try and alleviate the problem, I informed him that I did.

During the next ninety minutes, we tried several things, under his guidance. He recreated various scenarios; unplugged cables, tried other scenarios, unplugged DSL modem and tried other options. I still remained disconnected and disjointed. He asked another line technician to check the quality of the line. She didn’t encounter any problem. Finally, we arrived at a prognosis – lack of communications. The DSL modem was not communicating with the server. The company decided to overnight a replacement modem to solve the problem.

I have learned a lot from my lack of communication experience. I realized how dependant I had become on the Internet as well as others who work with me. I was disconnected from a lifeline. I could not check the latest news from home. I could not do any research. I could not send or receive any emails, consequently my email ministry was put on hold. I found myself in a state of suspended animation. Instant communication had become a dream. Now I knew what withdrawal symptoms really felt like. I also learned a lot about patience. There are some things I have no control over. There are some things that I need advice with and there are some things I have to yield to a higher power. I realize I need others and their gifts; that I always need to be a disciple, a learner, sitting at the feet of the wise and the experiences of life, in order to be taught.

I discovered that I don’t have to go through the maze of pressing all kinds of digits until I reach the sure voice of God when I pray. I discovered that I never really need to avail of technical support when it comes to God. He doesn’t speak in a mechanical voices or deal in jargon. He speaks his mind and, all we need in order to decipher it is to know the language of the heart because then we can have a heart to heart talk with him.

One of the valuable lessons I have learned from all this is that the Lord provides. At times, I may be on verge of panic, knowing that I have a looming deadline for another article for *Gulf Pine Catholic*. But, somehow, amid the daily happenings, the Lord takes me through a maze of experiences to teach me a valuable lesson as well as gain another insight into life.

I’m glad I am able to email this article to my editor. Now that my patience has been tried, I am much wiser.