

December 27, 2024



Center for
Spiritual
Development

Daily Reflections

THAT ALL MAY BE ONE

By Julie Mussché

From the Gospel of John

“... that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

JOHN 17:21-23

Reflection

Justice

O Holy Night

Yes

Faith

Dear reader,

Recently I heard a comment that unity is not about mediocrity, but an appreciation and celebration of plurality. That statement took me back to a Christmas story from the Sahara which was originally published as a reflection in 2020. It takes place on Christmas day in the city of Oujda. I hope you enjoy the story.

As our story in the Moroccan city of Oujda continues, the following morning, Christmas Day 1978, a group of us made our way toward the Souk for a breakfast of baguettes with butter and jam and cafe au lait. Since we would be leaving the following morning to begin our trip south across the Sahara Desert, we wanted to explore the remote residential parts of the city. In particular, a distant minaret piqued our interest and so we struck out to enjoy an adventure on a bright and brisk winter day in the foothills of the Atlas Mountain.

In the early afternoon, we headed back to town and were walking down a neighborhood street when we came across a woman sweeping the front of the entry to the courtyard of her home. She was not covered by a chador, but because our group was comprised of women, she freely smiled as we approached. We greeted her in French and carried on a vague conversation in a schoolbook dialect.

As has been the custom in the Middle East over the centuries, the woman, Fatima, invited us into her home where she and her cousin made us welcome with biscuits and mint tea. We visited for several hours and as the afternoon passed, any problems with language or cultural differences melted away. Before we left, Fatima invited us back that evening for dinner and to meet the rest of her family. She opened the invitation to any member of our traveling party.

Eight of us showed up that Christmas night and we were welcomed warmly by the household. Throughout the evening, various people arrived: Fatima's nephew on break from university in Paris, her husband's father, Farouk, a teacher at the local Koran school, and her husband Mohammed. Conversation was lively and went from Arabic to French to English and back again.

We were served chicken couscous for dinner, offered the finest cuts of meat, given the most generous portions, and were provided silverware as was our custom. At some point, Fatima shared with us that the meal was in celebration of our holiday of Christmas. This generous gift of hospitality and gesture of unity made our Christmas a special one.

The family's genuine openness and accepting warmth erased any geographic and cultural differences we might have had. This type of generosity and efforts at unity requires one to make a concerted effort to look for and see the face of God in everyone we encounter. The coming year will no doubt provide opportunities for all of us to welcome the stranger, and perhaps have a chance to encounter the Divine Mystery along the way.



People with Their Hands Together

Photo by Ivan Samkov

For Pondering

Take a moment today and just rest in God.

For Prayer

That all may be one, Divine One, let it be so.

Amen.

If you enjoy reading our reflections and would like to make a donation towards this ministry, click the button below!

Support CSD



Visit Website

714-744-3172

Join Mailing
List



To “Unsubscribe” from the daily reflections while remaining on our general mailing list,

please [email us](#). The unsubscribe function below will unsubscribe you from all emails from CSD. Please know we will never share your information.

Center for Spiritual Development | 434 A South Batavia Street | Orange, CA 92868 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)