

WHEN COVID HITS CLOSE

REX VASALLO

The line graph of our country's daily added COVID cases has finally started to move downhill. From a record high of 15200 in the beginning of April, it has come down to four digits for the past weeks, and even reached 1500 last Sunday. This is good, but the threat of the virus still remains. As we go through our daily tasks, there is a tendency for us to undermine this reality and see the increasing and decreasing numbers of our cases as mere numbers - until those cases hit close to home. I felt the terrifying reality of these added cases when my parents were added to the list.

When I discovered that my mom got exposed to a COVID-positive person who did not observe safety protocols, I got worried and angry. Worried that she might get it, and angry towards the person who caused this unnecessary trouble. When she started displaying symptoms and as those symptoms worsened, I also started overthinking and felt fear - fear that I might lose my mom. During those days, I would pray to God, but would still fear the worst - I could not let it go. There was no peace. Not until God spoke to me through Psalm 121:1-2. As I

struggled, God reminded me of two things through these passages. First, God reminded me that in moments like these, He is my source of help. Second, my helper, who is God, is the all-powerful Creator of heaven and earth - the One is in complete control of everything. And it dawned on me, knowing that God is in control, He must have a purpose for this. And, all of a sudden, my anger and worry was replaced with trust and courage. Trust that the Lord is at work and is in control, and courage to face whatever His purpose is for this trial.

A few days after and my mom's symptoms worsened and even more, she needed to be hospitalized. At this point, I still prayed that my mom would test negative because of my concern that she has a lot of co-morbidities. But, God answered differently from what we prayed for. Still, the Lord met us where we were. As my mom and I cried over the phone (because we were not allowed to be with her in the hospital), we acknowledged the reminders that God has given to us in Psalm 121. Aside from this Psalm, God led us to another passage that we can hold on to during these difficult times - 2 Corinthians 12:9. This

is not something that we want. We prayed that this would not happen to us, but the Lord answered otherwise. But one thing is for sure, that as we go through these, God's grace is sufficient for us. And, it truly was and still is, now that we are all negative from COVID.

Whatever you go through in life, no matter how difficult it may be, I want to assure you that God's grace is always sufficient for you. Embrace your helplessness and be reminded that in your helplessness, God is and will be your source of help. Trust that He is in control and He has a purpose. In our story, one of God's purposes is so that two nurses would hear the Gospel and believe in Jesus. That's how amazing God is - out of ugly situations, He makes beautiful things. So, when COVID hits close, or whatever challenges hit close, acknowledge that He is closer and He will be your help. He is in control, and His grace will be sufficient. Whatever happens, He can transform your worries to worship, your tests to testimonies, and your brokenness to breakthroughs. Trust God and keep the faith! ✝