

For the past 10 years, I have been visiting Bethany Nursing Home monthly together with other volunteers. We are a familiar fixture to many of the residents through our bingo and sing along sessions. Some of us also visit the wards to chat, pray and sing with those who are bed-ridden. Just like many of the volunteers serving in the various sub-ministries under COSC, we are prepared to befriend and journey with our beneficiaries for long periods. As relationships cannot be rushed or forced, it may take months or even years to form friendships and to gain their trust. However, a recent encounter with a new resident at the nursing home has reawakened a new sense of urgency within me; I realized I do not always have the luxury of time.

The first time I met her, she was sitting by her bed with an oxygen machine; tubes were affixed to her nostrils. She looked younger than most of the residents I have met over the years. She explained that she could not breathe properly and relied on the machine for air. I also noticed an opened Bible by her bed side, we were heartened to learn from her that she is a Christian. While chatting, a song came to mind to minister to her but I thought that I could do it during our next visit. But we didn't visit the following month as we brought some of the other residents for an outing to Gardens by the Bay. By the time we returned to the nursing home, it had been two months. During that visit, I still didn't seek out my new friend. Due to the lack of volunteers, most of the time we are not able to cover all the residents in a single visit. But just when we were about to leave, I met a nurse who was stationed at her ward. Remembering I still haven't sung her the song, I casually asked the nurse how she was. With much regret, I was informed that she had passed on. That evening as my heart quietened, I confessed to God that I thought I had time, I wasn't in a hurry to get to her. My only consolation is that she is home with the Lord. Perhaps she would have heard my song from her eternal home?

Here is a little excerpt from "This is the air I breathe"

***And I... I'm desperate for You***

***And I... I'm lost without You***

May I never forget to have an urgent yet unhurried heart with everyone I meet especially while serving in ministry.

***Serene Ho***

***WBOP***