

Sermon: October 30, 2012
"Going west ... finding the church"

Jesus says ----- "If you continue in my word ... and you are truly my disciples ... then you will know the truth, and THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE!!" So true ... so powerful.

There is probably no more important "truth" than discovering (or re-discovering) THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES. You think and reflect about yourself, and I'll do the same.

What is it about yourself that you like ... or don't like?

Is there something that has always fueled your passion and your spirit? ... and as time passes, that "something" seems to be fading away??

Are there a few things you'd like to change? ... something new you'd like to try? ----- but you are afraid, because of what others may think???

I feel my best personally ... I feel like I'm at "the top my game" as a human being ... I'm the most true to myself ----- when I see God in the "ordinary places and moments of life."

When I am free and true to myself ----heck, I can see God's spirit in a bad cup of coffee!@!!

I see moments ... where the footprints of a humble carpenter come alive.

I see God's goodness and grace in the faces and eyes of each one of you.

I'm not sure exactly when it happened. And ... as I share my puny journey ... you can reflect on yours.

It was shortly after my dad died. I remember ----- his funeral is on a Thursday ... the following Monday we flew to Texas to "pick-up" Q.

It had nothing to do with this ... but ----- something started to go wrong.

Ever feel this way about your journey? Something is missing. You lose the perspective ... you lose the "switch" ... the "special something" bringing you joy and passion in your life.

Jude --- being the good Hungarian Catholic she is --- could see it and feel it. She looks at me ... "something has to change ... and together we can do it."

There were a few folks who didn't seem to like me or my style ... can you imagine that!@??

And I'm sure I caused them some grief, too. You know how it is. You can work with 100 people ... 98 of whom enjoy who you are ... 2 would like to bring you down. You go to bed at night ... pre-occupied with the 2 who don't like you. There are 12 people on the board of directors. 10 are team players ... 2 are nay-sayers. And the 10 spend all their time trying to please the 2.

When we do this ... WE BECOME SOMEONE WE'RE NOT MEANT TO BE. We lose who we really are!!

Jude and I look at each other ---- "We gotta do something ... we gotta get our MOJO back!!"

So, we get into my pick-up truck ... with a 2-year old in the back seat ... and we head west. Two destinations: our kids in Arizona and Los Angeles. In between ... for 2 weeks ... we hit every bad-looking truck-stop we could see. Towns with populations of 75 and 375. We talked to the hippy and the homeless. We rejoiced in mountains and deserts. We smiled and laughed and smiled some more.

We leave the church for two weeks ... and yet we DISCOVER THE CHURCH in God's ordinary places. Strong coffee and grits ... young adults trying to "make it" in this world ... people of all shapes and sizes ... all religions and varied journeys ----- just seeing "life" for what it is!!

I think of Jesus words: THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE.

Yes ... in life ... we need to get along. We have to please some people ... and there will always be those who don't like or understand us.

But ----- we can't afford to lose our soul along the way.

We can't lose the "inner something" making you YOU and me ME.

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I came back ... with a fresh set of eyes, a restored heart, and a renewed spirit.
Once again ... I find myself rejoicing in and discovering this “higher power” in the common-ordinary-
spaces-and-places of life.

Jesus did a lot in his 3 years of preaching and teaching and healing.
And nothing was and still is more important than his gift ----- of bringing out the truth and goodness
of the human spirit ... in the ordinary folks he touched every day.

Please remember:

You have a heartsong.

You have a spirit.

You have dreams.

*And most of all ----- God gives you the gift of who you are.
It's the most precious gift in the world.*

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October 30, 2011

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