

The Mustard Seed

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March, 2010

Grace and peace be yours,

Since my mother was a McDonnell and I went to grade school and high school at St. Vincent (Akron), home of the "Fighting Irish", St. Patrick's Day has always been a big deal for me. Add into the mix, that the good bishop is also my patron saint, and you have a prescription for serious merry-making each March 17th.

At this stage in life, however, I bring much more to the experience than excitement over a free day from school, (Yes, we even got a free day in grade school !) Time takes on greater significance with maturity and with new reverence for time comes a new appreciation for one's history and future.

I realize now in a way I did not as a younger person, how indebted I am to the women and men who went before me: to those who endured the suffering of the potato famine, to those who had the courage to leave everything and begin again in a new country. And most of all, to those who kept the faith, the faith that I have received, the faith that shapes my life.

At this stage of life my thoughts also extend forward to a future I will never know. I have grandchildren. I want to protect them from suffering and know I cannot. I want a guarantee that the faith that means so much to me, will continue to give direction to their lives. Yet I realize no guarantee is possible.

What I do believe, what reflection on the past has taught me, is that we cannot go where the grace of God cannot find us. That is true of my future and it is true of those grandchildren. We swim in a sea of grace, said Karl Rahner, S.J. I would add that sometimes the current is swift and choppy !

But we are never alone.

For discussion:

Whether or not you are lucky enough to be Irish (!), how did the women and men who went before you bless your life?

How do you want your life to bless the generation who will come after you?

Love,

Pat

New in the Resource Center

St. Anthony Messenger Press has just produced a new series of SCC discussion guides. The series, Gathered in His Name, includes seven titles designed to help small groups “grow spiritually and better understand distinctly Catholic experiences.” In addition to guides on the Gospel of Matthew, the Old Testament, and the Gospel of Mark and Lent and Easter, the series includes “distinctly Catholic” guides: “Great Twentieth-Century Catholics” (Thomas Merton, Mother Teresa, Dorothy Day, etc.), “The Spirit of Vatican II”, and “The Sacraments”. The first guide in the series “Making Connections” is especially designed for a brand-new SCC. A copy of that issue is available in the resource center for your examination. For each of the six- session guides, the author provides opening and closing prayer ideas, commentary and /background reading and reflection questions. Individual copies are \$3.95.



We hear...

...that several SCC's are using a number of parish offerings to attend together as a way of sharing their growth in faith.

Annie Wells says that her faith sharing group has been attending the Thursday morning Acts of the Apostles bible study together.

Sr. Diana Culbertson's four week series on the Gospel of Luke was attended by several members of **Jan Hoffman's** SCC.

Over a bowl of soup in the gathering area, **Carol Simpson** reported that members of her SCC were planning to attend the Lenten speaker series.

On-line Resources

The Diocese of Trenton, New Jersey has terrific web-site with a very thorough compilation of Small Christian community resources. When looking for a discussion tool, you would be well- served by checking out, www.dioceseoftrenton.org . Choose the “Church, Family & Youth” link, then, Office of Catechesis. You will be directed to resources for Small Christian Communities. This comprehensive listing provides link to the publisher and ordering information.