

The Sharing Org

Ministry to the Adult Foster Care Community

May 2016

Ministry Moment...

There is one woman who always thanks me for coming. She, with great emotion, tells me that she misses going to Mass each week. In her, I see a great devotion to her faith tradition and from that tradition an honest expression of her faith in Jesus.

I once had a Roman Catholic woman who would kiss my hand after every service. This made me uncomfortable, but she needed this as part of her worship of Jesus. With her I had good talks of faith in Jesus, and I had no reason to think that she did not believe in the resurrection of Jesus from the grave. But I often struggled with the things I did not understand, such as the kissing of my hand after each service.

In this ministry there has been one person who has influenced and guided my thinking most: Mother Teresa. Since her death I have watched her biography and read many books. She and her faith in Jesus have always challenged me. Despite the fact that my Protestant thinking is drastically different from her Romanist thinking, I am challenged by her faith in the resurrected Jesus who lives. I am challenged by her perspective and dogged determination that the living Jesus was with her in her everyday walk of going in and loving the destitute poor in Calcutta. There is a saying that goes, "I can't hear what you are saying because your actions are so loud." Despite the Protestant in me that hollers to find a nice Protestant person to influence me, I cannot drown out the fact that Mother Teresa lived a life that shames my own faith actions at times. Heh, heh, I guess if I had a patron saint it would be Mother Teresa. ☺

When I meet people in the services I realize that each of them expresses their faith in the only ways they now. I have a gentleman who brings his guitar to play and sing along with "Victory in Jesus." I have another who raises his hands and shouts "Hallelujah." I have others who demand to have their Bibles opened to the main verse while I read it, and I have some who kiss my hand after the service is finished. I am aware that every person's expression of faith is different depending on how they were raised and which faith tradition they come from. And it is good--I am happy to have the variety of faiths come together to worship and find comfort in the proclamation of Jesus; his death, burial, and resurrection.

~John

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

(1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Prayer Letter...

A vision for this ministry is for us to be a catalyst for local churches to reach out to the AFC homes in their own neighborhoods. I have been planning on sending a letter out to churches, to begin the process, but as I have prayed, God has put it on my heart that we are not ready for this yet. I believe God would have us have our own house in order first. I believe that we, as a ministry, need to become a real prayer machine before we should reach out and invite other churches to join us. I believe that we are doing certain things well, but at the same time, there is one thing that we should do better and that is prayer. My heart is heavy that we need to increase the level of our prayer coverage for the work that we do and for the people we minister to. I am including in this correspondence a prayer list how you might join me in daily prayer. I ask that if you would, please join me in just five minutes each day in prayer for the residents and our ministry to them. When we are all praying together, I believe it will be like a unified stroke as we each having an oar propel the boat forward toward the distant shore of seeing the churches ministering to the homes in their own neighborhoods.

Last month I sent you a list to help you with your daily prayers for our work. Have you been praying? I asked you for just five minutes a day. Were you able to find time to do it? I heard from a couple of people who vowed to join me in praying each day, and I was greatly encouraged. This month, I have added an updated list for you to use when you pray, but I have a special request for you to pray about this month. Please pray for the staff, guardians, and caregivers of the residents. Pray that the people whom they care for don't become just cogs in their daily work lives. I was thinking how easy it is for us to view our work as routine and to not be as attentive as we should be at times. I'm not speaking about anyone in particular, but I am aware of my own tendency to forget that what I do is meaningful and demands my own constant care and concern. So please join me this month as we pray every day for the people who directly care for the residents.

As I write this, our Board of Directors has just approved the appointment Jenn Davies (minister to our Moravian Corridor homes) to the seventh seat on our board. Jenn is a prayer warrior with great passion for the residents we serve. Please keep Jenn in your prayers as she comes on board to help us in sharing the gospel and love of Jesus to the residents in the nursing care community.

Our family is doing well. Thanks to an anonymous person, we have been given a generous sum of money and specifically asked to use it for a family vacation. So this June Megan and I will taking the kids to Michigan's Upper Peninsula for a week of seeing what there is to see up there. I have only been there once in my life, and I am happy to have the opportunity to share this with my children as well! Pray for a safe & healthy trip for us.

I pray for you daily by name. I was convicted a couple months ago that the people I am attached to in this ministry could not depend on me to actually be praying for them. I realized that I may have said that I prayed for people, but it was always haphazardly, here-and-there type prayers--nothing consistent. That has changed now. I am waking an hour early each morning, and I literally speak your name to our God and ask him to bless you and that the light of His countenance would shine upon you. So if nothing else, you can rise out of bed each morning and know that at least one person on this earth is calling out to God on your behalf. I pray that you will find encouragement in this.

With his Holy Blessings,



John