

Rector's Musings ~ Making Memories for our Children

Author Dan Groat, in his book An Enigmatic Escape, wrote: *"My world was very limited in size and experience. Small things took on extra importance, at least to a child."*

We who are adults can attest though many of us are 30, 40, or perhaps even more years past our childhood can still remember the kind words and deeds that adults of our childhood years gifted to us. We can agree with Dan Groat's words. Small things can take on extra importance, especially to children.

After the land snails I brought into Nursery School for Show and Tell escaped (they were later found as escargot on the classroom radiator!), it was Mrs. Frazier who hunted in the dark of night to replace all eleven snails. In Kindergarten I ran down the halls and knocked over the strictest teacher in the school, Mrs. Sbrocchi. But when the principal, Mrs. Haack arrived to survey the scene she enfolded in her arms me, the crying child, rather than the injured teacher down, first. Mrs. Pearsall was a key soul shaper in my life. She taught me to dance not just before an audience of adoring parents, but also dance regularly for strangers at a nursing home. She even had her students wander from person to person after the performance to greet and curtsy before them – a pastoral call format I will never forget. It was this former New York City Rockette's fault my favorite fashion accessory is a smile, as Margaret Pearsall would always say, *"If you smile with your face, people will never notice the mistakes you make with your feet!"*

The adults of the church where I grew up were equally important to shaping my soul. Miss Commentz, the parish confirmation teacher (who I am STILL friends on Facebook with!), gave me my first singing solo at Vacation Bible School, and drove me back and forth to All State Chorus Events. Mrs. Laduca loved to do crazy things in Sunday School that made learning fun. We marched around the room singing, "Onward Christian Soliders" and went on scavenger hunts in the sanctuary to understand Christian symbolism. She even went so far as to tape large packets of Trident under our seats, read from Matthew 13:44, *"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field."* She then reminded us that sometimes we have to look hard for the gifts God has given us.

I am grateful to the people in this parish who work extra hard to be kind to children – in their own families, within our faith community, and in the world at large. I am grateful to the parents of our parish who bring their children to Sunday School. I am ESPECIALLY grateful to those who teach in our Sunday School community: **Lauren Cline, Kim and Anthony Gioseffi, Ken Grinnell, Jen and Dana Harvey, Autumn Kent, Linda Lassonde, Kelley Muir, Nicole and Justin Otto, Brent Stagnaro, Karin Taylor, Peggy Trivilino, and Julie Turner.**

I am also grateful to all those who volunteer in outreach venues that support the care of children: Our Dr. Seuss Breakfast, Laundry Love, New Horizons, gifts for CHIP's (Children of Incarcerated Parents), and our annual Christmas Angel Tree. I am grateful to those in our parish who have made donations to finance the purchasing of chimes and a new, collapsible performance platform. I am grateful to our music team, especially Ken Grinnell and Mark Cleveland, who have worked hard to support and expand our Children's Chiming Program. Finally, I am thankful to you in the pew. You always have a choice to notice a child. To compliment them on what they are wearing, say a kind word, and spend time mentoring someone smaller than yourself.

Never forget what Jesus himself said: *Matthew 19: 13-14* “*Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; but Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.’*”

Blessings and love,

Marjorie xo+