

So, do we all have our walking shoes on? Are we traveling light? And are we ready to engage the unique adventure of every walk we take?

In Luke's gospel Jesus sent the 72 to walk into places he intended to visit. Jesus gave them a mission of peace and healing and told them to travel light. They were not to force themselves on others but rather listen to the people's response. I believe the Spirit of Jesus sends us in the same way to walk into places God wants to visit. We take many far-reaching walks that are actually close to home. As we walk together into this homily time, I invite us to focus on 2 words: anointing and re-creation.

Every day as we walk into the moments of our lives, each moment holds the possibility of anointing and re-creation. Here are some places God wants to visit, anoint, and re-create through us.

At work interactions with colleagues, clients, or students can be enriching and life-giving. A time for us to anoint others with joy and wisdom and be anointed by their gifts of peace and presence. Yet other work moments can be quite challenging. Patient needs, layoffs, and hard contract decisions hold tensions that need an anointing of compassion, level-headedness, and compromise. God is in all these work moments of joy and difficulty calling us to listen to the God within and among us, to anoint and re-create the world.

We could be walking to one of life's transition moments—retirement, loss, change of residence, or an expanding family. God calls us to engage the moment—to grapple with the change, accept others' anointings of love and healing, and anoint others with the new life another chapter brings. I asked my son-in-law James if I could share some of his story of loss that I believe embodies the message of today's scripture. James's father was a wonderful dad in his growing up years. However, in James's adult years his dad's excessive drinking strained and

eventually severed family relationships. Because of these relational issues, his dad was not at their wedding. Although the wedding was an overwhelmingly joyful celebration, James also felt a sense of loss and was sad his dad was not there. Two years later James has taken a major step in re-establishing a relationship with him. Recently he was able to have a meaningful conversation with his dad and to tell his dad he forgave him and loved him. He also sent his dad a Father's Day card and some wedding pictures. Just as in the gospel the 72 did not know whether they would be accepted, James walked into that conversation uncertain of his dad's response. He traveled light as Jesus instructed, relying on his inner strength and conviction—the Spirit within. In doing so, James anointed his dad with honesty, healing, and forgiveness. And his dad anointed him by listening and by accepting James's feelings. This mutual anointing is re-creating them as individuals and their relationship together. Their walk into healing love is not over. It will continue to unfold as James lives this gospel and enfleshes today's words from Galatians: "All that matters is that one is created anew."

As I think of ministry moments that speak to this gospel, *Water Is Life Kenya*, a charity our community supports, comes to mind. Joyce Tannien is walking a path that has brought life and better health to the Kenyan people. George and Mimi's mission trips to El Salvador have anointed the people with better education and housing. Our community's Bernardine Center Team has anointed many people with food, clothing, a smile, and a listening ear. During Kathy's trip to the Dominican Republic she and Annie helped young people at school and gained a deeper appreciation of *their* struggles and *our* comfortable lifestyle. Truly an anointing of love and gratitude. I think of the many years our children participated in Operation Santa Claus in Philadelphia. They walked into homes that barely had a chair in the living room—and were anointed by the kids' smiles and humbled by their poverty. To be sure, in each of these

examples the anointing has been mutual and re-creation has occurred. I've asked Anne if she would share for a moment what her walk with the homeless has been like. —Anne

Thanks, Anne, for anointing us with your story.

Living today's gospel needs no formal sending. An ordinary walk in our neighborhood or on a local trail provides an opportunity to live its message. On a mile and a half walk last week I stepped into a variety of sidewalk conversations. At different points along the way, the neighbors and I bantered about the Phillies, their yard work, their new rescue dog, and their kids. These were quick conversations, but in that moment of engagement I felt anointed by their laughter and our exchange. By the end of the walk I knew *God* had anointed me through them. Each of us has similar stories of fleshy, everyday gospel living. God invites us into greater awareness of the power of every moment to anoint and re-create.

As we walk into the moments of this coming week, let us be aware of the sacred call and power of ordinary moments to anoint and be anointed, to re-create and be recreated.

Keep on walking. The world awaits your anointing and re-creation.

*Scripture Readings—14<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time*  
Isaiah 66: 10-14c  
Galatians 6: 14-18  
Luke 10: 1-11 (shorter form)

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