

But imagine anyway!

Imagine we jubilarians gathered here in celebration.

Can we continue to reawaken to the realm of grace?

The Jesuit theologian Walter Brueggemann writes about the Prophetic imagination which he describes as an artistic direction in which truth is told in a way that offers an alternative vision of the world. Barbara has given us a stunning example of her prophetic imagination calling us into a non-visible realm of grace...totally available in the cosmos.

Let us go back to this place of miracles with an exhausted, grieving Jesus, grumpy disciples, a young kid with his lunch hidden in his cloak and lots of needy people.

In the midst of this, just a few words...FEED THEM YOURSELVES, FEED THEM YOUR SELF.

I believe the heart of Jesus' message is FEED THEM YOURSELVES...FEED THEM YOURSELF.

He wasn't talking about getting take-out or doing door dash. He was calling them to a challenging and lifelong task...a task which we are celebrating today in this Jubilee Eucharist. Jesus calls us to take up our lives and give them away in love.

Well then we must first "get a life"...remember when people used to say in a pejorative way. GET A LIFE!

And getting a life is a lifelong task of finding your self. And so 60 and 65 years ago, we began this journey of finding ourselves ...

Pope Francis puts it this way...vocation is a divine seed which springs up in the soil of our existence, opens our hearts to God and to others so that we can share with them the treasure we have found.

Another way of saying, Feed them your self.

As we celebrate this jubilee we naturally recall our journeys...from the days of enthusiastic beginnings and dreams to experiences of re-visioning , re-understanding our ideas of God, of ourselves, our calls to prophetic ministry, our transitions into new consciousness and understandings ; through times of ebbing faith and even loss of faith, and personal crises.

Perhaps during those times we may have prayed a prayer that the writer Flannery O'Connor wrote in the margins of her efforts to write her stories and novels...she wrote to God...Please help me get down under things and find where you are. " Please help me get down under things and find where you are."

Another way of finding yourself in order to give yourself away in love...In order to Feed them your self.

Life is not an opera script where we know the acts and plots in advance. It is a journey of facing the evolving dramas of success and failures, of exciting beginnings and also disappointments and sad and compromised endings.

Perhaps the enduring theme of all of our life long journeys is the search for God, for meaning and at the heart of all of our combined years of searching is God's faithfulness which has made God an abiding presence in all of our journeys

In a recent book about the future of religious life entitled Sensing the Spirit, Judith Merkle suggests that religious life is best described through the language of the abundance of the Kingdom, the hundredfold.

I've always wondered what the heck is the hundredfold.

When I was a young postulant, right here in this house, many years ago; It was Lent and I was probably tired of cleaning the clean, I was walking up the back stairs to the chapel.

I remember exactly where I was when I had this thought.

If I don't get my hundredfold by Easter, I'm out of here!

If you had asked me at that time what I was looking for, I wouldn't have been able to tell you.

What I was really looking for was the abundance of God's grace and little did I know it would take a lifetime to find it, understand it and then give it away. Oftentimes this abundance is not found in galactic proportions but in special moments when we truly experience God's presence. It is hidden in the ordinary, in surprises.

So now that we have reached these so-called wisdom years, where do we go from here?

Let me close by sharing an experience I had when I was a campus minister at Albertus Magnus College.

I had about 15 minutes of rock star popularity when I quoted Chance the Rapper in my graduation prayer. I'm sure Chance is not on your playlist; he wasn't on mine until I encountered some wisdom in his rap.

Chance the Rapper says: When praises go up.... Blessings come down....when praises go up...blessings come down.

Does it sound a bit familiar? It has been part of our Dominican culture for 800 years.

To Praise, To Bless, To Preach

To feed them ourselves; to give ourselves away in love

Let us continue on this amazing journey.