

transforming generosity

Finding Authenticity on a Godward Path

28 OCTOBER 2018

BY THE REV. ED GOMEZ



Recently, a couple in their late 30s informed me of their desire to get married. Delighted, I scheduled a meeting to cover our church policy and all the necessary preparations for their special day. Finally, the time arrived for them to pick the readings. I showed them the suggestions from our Book of Common Prayer and asked them to let me know their preferences.

About a week later they emailed me their choices. I quickly recognized the usual Genesis "one flesh" reading and first Corinthians. However, the Gospel selection was not one I readily recognized for a wedding reading. I Googled Mark 10:46-52 and read the familiar story of the healing of the blind Bartimaeus. I thought they had made a mistake, so I called them, and they confirmed that both had made this selection.

We had a final meeting to discuss the liturgy and we agreed to go over the readings then. They began by telling me their separate stories about the horrors of the dating scene and how neither really found someone with whom they could really be their authentic self. They said they found themselves always trying to accommodate the wishes and lifestyles of everyone they were meeting. In the end, they would break off those relationships, choosing to be who they really were and not some expectation that society or the "in" crowd wanted them to be. They said they felt they were just sitting on the roadside as other happy couples waltzed by their lives.

They prayed that God would open their eyes to see the person who they were being called to be and a path toward a shared life with someone with similar values and experiences of God. God heard their prayers. As they sat on the roadside feeling isolated and hopeless, a miraculous thing happened. The woman was feeling particularly down and decided to surprise her father at work. At that same moment, one of her father's vendors arrived to drop off an order. The dad invited them both to lunch and, as they say, the rest is history.

In our last preparation session that evening, they summed it up by sharing that they realized that when you surrender to your Godward path, God's generosity abounds by letting you see where you are to go. Both were transformed by God's abundant generosity with the vision to see what was important, to remain true to their calling and live into their authentic life. They recognized God's transforming generosity, but it took sitting on the roadside before they could recognize it.

Edward Gomez is Vicar of St. Paul's/San Pablo Episcopal Church in Houston and a member of the TENS Board of Directors.

For reflection ...

- ❖ When have you been sitting on the roadside of life or at a crossroads? What did that feel like and what did you do?
- ❖ Share a time when you chose to walk a different path from others that led you to God's abundance generosity.