

Glimpse

Daydreaming

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Often during the homily at the parish where I am privileged to celebrate the Eucharistic liturgy, I stop in the middle of a sentence, just stop. I then ask the congregation to reflect on the topic about which they had been daydreaming without knowing it. They laugh, of course, but I ask them seriously to find out at which topic I interrupted their interior journey. The topic at which I arrested their dreaming was not at all the topic which began the flight into their imaginations and or desires. I assume the homily is good and would provoke some response. I also assume the healthy process of dream-wandering.

Wouldn't it just be the very best, to have individuals replace me at the podium and share what aspect of the Readings or my homily assisted their individual takeoff. Alas, that is not in the Roman Missal or any documents of the liturgy. I have found myself taking such trips while I am actually delivering the well-prepared homily. Amazing how the human mind works and doesn't! I wonder if the holy people we know as mystics were quite-advanced daydreamers and God rested easily in their minds and hearts helping them to see something beyond mental appreciation. The power of our imaginations is a God-given gift and so God can ride around in our daydreams and fantasies any time God wishes. I believe deeply that God uses any and everything to draw our attention to something very good about each of us that God is quite sure we do not know or perhaps accept.

We can read scripture for a single purpose, and that is to misuse it, to find out what is not good about us, or in some cases, about others. That is why the Gospels are avoided as a relaxing experience. In offering a homily I am sorry to feel that some out there are waiting to be convicted and condemned by the Word just proclaimed. The spiral then begins and they do not want to hear any more. Where do they go?

The human mind can think of one specific thing for the length of a second and then that flips the mind to the next and the next. It is fun for me to retrace my flippings from there, to a here, from where I woke up to what got me flipping into the drift. At the liturgy or in private prayer, our minds bounce around on the trampoline of our unconscious playrooms. It is my experience that in every daydream there is something precious, hidden in the muck of our human frailty, which is grace-charged and has been waiting patiently to be recognized and

rescued. It is healthy and spiritually advancing to humbly accept the good within the greedy, the envious, the resentful, the vengeful, the lustful, or the prideful wrappings in which it will often be discovered.

I never played football. In past daydreams, I have often scored the winning touchdown to great cheers and celebrations. Bingo, *pride, selfishness, need for recognition!* That's too easy, because after the play I always seem to notice a child in a wheelchair waving his hands in pure joy. In my imagining I trot over and give the ball to him or somebody else who seems to be left out. The prayer, for me, is to move through the first pride-judgement to the deeper reality that I do want to be doing good things for somebody. Is that pride? Is wanting to be good and to do something good a matter of pride? I hope not!

Having daydreams are healthy and natural. Praying with them, peeling them down to the God-blessed truth, is to know and accept that we wish to be a blessing, a sacrament, a day-doer. It is only a glimpse so keep the dreaming a part of your day-prayer.