

SMILE

Thanksgiving Sunday, Oct 9, 2016

St. Paul's Cathedral, Kamloops

The Very Rev. Ken Gray

A SECULAR STORY

Not long ago, I received a very heartfelt thank you note from one of my former employees. She used the occasion of my stepping away from the company I started 33+ years ago to tell me how grateful she was for something I did for her five years before, that frankly, while I remember doing it, had no idea it had impacted her in such a profound way. In fact, all of her mentions of gratitude had nothing to do with her actual work, and everything to do with her personal life. She told me that the act of writing the note and sending it, gave her great pleasure, not to mention how I felt upon receiving it.

It was such a meaningful experience for both of us, I decided I would work on expressing gratitude more easily for myself, because the more we practice giving thanks, the easier it becomes to make giving thanks a practice. Since receiving that note, I have focused on both being grateful and sharing with others the gratitude I feel. And in the process discovered that what the psychologists say about gratitude is actually true. **Habitually focusing on and appreciating the positive aspects of life is related to a generally higher level of psychological well-being.**

From Luke 17:11-19

Then (the Samaritan) when he **saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God** with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and **thanked him.**

JOHN CAPUTO

Religion is a doxology of the glory of the smile.

Religion is a matter of unconditional affirmation.

“The smile is a silent affirmation of life, a subtle embrace of life, a weak force strong enough to sustain life and give it hope. To smile when it is impossible to smile, what greater strength is there than that.”

“The smile gives us grounds for hope, albeit groundless grounds, for hoping against hope, for smiles can turn into frowns, and laughter into tears, which means that hope, an audacious hope knows how to smile through our tears.

PSALM 66

. . . We went through fire and through water;
yet you have brought us out to a spacious place.

GOSPEL CONCLUSION

(Jesus) said to him, ‘Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.’