

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 10, 2019

When did you feel you didn't have the ability to do something God asked you to do? Throughout the Old and New Testament Jesus chose imperfect, weak hearted people to conduct his important work. For example, in today's First Reading (Isaiah 6: 1-2A, 3-8) God called Isaiah to be a prophet. Isaiah responded "Woe is me, I am doomed! For I am a man of unclean lips, living among a people of unclean lips..." And yet when the Lord asked "Whom should I send?" Isaiah said, "Send me." Isaiah was willing to take a leap of faith by becoming a prophet.

In the Second Reading (15 Corinthians 15: 1-11) Paul calls himself "one abnormally born" and the "least of the apostles" for Jesus to appear to. Simon Peter in the Gospel (Luke 5: 1-11) was probably skeptical about lowering his fishing nets upon Jesus' request after fishing all night and catching nothing. But, as a result of lowering his nets he was rewarded with nets full of fish. In reply, Simon Peter fell at the knees of Jesus and said, "Depart from me Lord, for I am a sinful man." Jesus responded "Do not be afraid from now on you will be catching men." I imagine Simon Peter wondered about the meaning of those words and the associated tasks that he was going to be given.

Almost 4 years ago Jesus called me to do something out of my comfort zone. I was afraid. I did not think I could do it. My closest friend told me it would be too troublesome to undertake. And yet, in the midst of my doubts, I felt God was tugging at my heart to accept this challenge. Due to family adversity, my sister Luanne asked me if her then 14-year old daughter Angela could move from Wisconsin to Springfield to live with me during the school year. I said, "yes," or maybe it was the Holy Spirit who said "yes." Of course, I reminded God that one of the reasons that I did not get married and have children was because I did not want to raise a teenage girl. God had the final laugh on that idea of mine.

So, Angela moved in and started school at Sacred Heart-Griffin. Immediately, my world was tipped upside down as I drove an active teenager daily to and from work and to and from swim practice. This experience transformed me as I was introduced to prom, swim meets, fundraisers, volunteering at school events, Catholic Heart Work Camp, and much more. Life got easier at the beginning of Angela's junior year when she got a car and driver's license. Alleluia! Now I had the worry of what time she would come home from social activities.

During her high school years Angela transformed. She shed her cocoon and took flight as a beautiful butterfly. She made new friends and has a reputation for being very kind. She progressed from a “C” student in junior high school to an “A” student in high school. She was elected to the Senior Homecoming Court. She was confirmed and helped others at Catholic Heart Work Camp. She received a high ACT score. She tells me she is ready for college next fall during which she will pursue a degree in biology, and perhaps continue school to become a veterinarian.

With much, much help from God and your many prayers I became a part of Angela’s transformation. And, all because I said “yes” almost four years ago. Would I do it again? The Holy Spirit has just over two years to work on me until Angela’s youngest sister starts high school.

Laura Gundrum