



OUR LADY *of*
GOOD COUNSEL
CATHOLIC CHURCH

Fr. Matt's Musings

March 25, 2021

The Scriptures contain individuals with unusual names. During this fifth week of Lent, we have a reading from the Book of Daniel (not an unusual name). In the reading, we hear the names: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as well as the king, Nebuchadnezzar. My siblings' names are Steve, Bob, Kath, and Mare (all nicknames). My friends have similar common names.

Jesus' ministry often centered on those individuals who were different, outcasts, and those who did not fit into the normal societal structures. People and ideas that are different, challenge, maybe even threaten us. The spiritual life is so often a call to go to places that are new, unknown, and at times uncomfortable for us. I believe these are so often graced moments and encounters.

When I arrived in Camden in 2008, I was challenged early on with the reality of homelessness. Previously, it was a concept that was real but faceless. Early on, I found that two individuals spent the night on our front porch for protection from the elements and safety from the city's violence. Their names were Ken and Barbie. Ken was a scrappy, African American man who was missing a couple of front teeth. Barbie was a short, corpulent, middle-aged white woman who wore compression socks. They were kind, generous, funny, and caring individuals who wanted to help and be involved. They were not the Ken and Barbie of toy doll fame.

What challenges us to look at the world in a new and different way? Who is the Shadrach in my life who does not get my attention because of the way he looks or speaks or whatever other reason that is different from me and those with whom I feel comfortable?

Carry a Shadrach or a Meshach in your mind and heart to look anew at all of our brothers and sisters, especially those whom we might not immediately notice or appreciate. Jesus' particular ministry was to the lost and forgotten. As disciples, our lives and ministry are called to imitate his.

Live Jesus!

Fr. Matt

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In Christ - Stronger Together

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