



# Thoughts on the Journey...

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My neighborhood is a collection of well manicured lawns and pristine gardens. The people around me do a stellar job of maintaining their yards and I marvel at their devotion. My yard, on the other hand, is easy to identify when driving up my street. Depending on where we are in the growing season, my yard could be considered a hostel for every weed known to the Midwest: it's a sea of yellow when the dandelions are in bloom, clovers get the word out to other clovers that they can thrive there, those periscope-looking weeds grow to great heights over night, and creepy looking vines manage to choke the daylight out of everything that's supposed to be thriving. However, I have found (or at least I tell myself) when you regularly mow weeds, they make your grass look manicured, especially from a distance. Several weeks ago, the weeds were giving me away again and my grass was long overdue for a cut.

It was a hot and humid day. As much as I dreaded taking on that chore, I started up the mower and began the back-and-forth that made my grass look like the neighbors'. The front yard is easy, but the back yard is all hill and very difficult. As I made my way toward the back to do the dreaded, I said a prayer asking for strength to get through it. In a matter of minutes a young lady came walking up to me from out of nowhere. I turned off my mower to see what she wanted. "Would you please tell me the fastest way to get to Baltimore if we are walking? We just got off work from the Ralston plant and our ride didn't come." Now, the town of Baltimore is about 12 miles from Lancaster. It was blistering hot and she was already drenched in sweat. I responded, "Honey, you can't walk to Baltimore. Give me a minute and I will take you home." Her fiancé came around the corner and I extended the offer to him as well. I went in the house to get them some water along with my keys and purse. While I was in the house, the young man began cutting my grass in the back yard. He refused to leave until he finished the job. I was overcome with emotion, because I am sure that these two people were an answer to my grass-cutting prayer.

As we began our ride to Baltimore, they noticed my Bible on the dashboard and my rosary hanging from the rear-view mirror. The conversation began and they wanted to know as much about Jesus as I could tell them. In our time together, bits and pieces of their broken lives unfolded. The young man's name was Jeremiah and the young lady's name was Destiny. He could not read, so when I stopped the car he asked me to show him where his name is in the Bible. After hearing

his story and his thirst for God, I thought to myself, "how appropriately he was named - Jeremiah, *the weeping prophet*."

In Matthew's gospel Jesus is talking with his apostles and asks them, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" They responded with various answers including John the Baptist, Elijah, and Jeremiah. Then Jesus posed a more pointed question, "Who do YOU say that I am?" Simon Peter said in reply,

**"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father."**

Jesus makes the point that the only way Peter could know the answer to the question he posed was because the Father revealed it to him. The same is true for all of us. We come to know Jesus because it is God who reveals him to us. The most important question in our lives concerns the Person of Christ. Who is He? What is He to us? What role does he play in our present and future? The answers to these questions will determine what we believe and how we will live.

Sometimes we take for granted that everyone in this day and age knows the answers to this question, "who is Jesus?" Quite clearly, there are many souls who have not had an encounter with Christ. Like Peter who was given the revelation of who Jesus is, it is the Holy Spirit that reveals the Son of the Living God to each of us.

The older I get, the more convinced I am that nothing happens by accident; the Lord is always looking out for us and building His Kingdom through the Body of Christ. God is in the ordinary every day events of our lives and it is there that his kingdom grows. It was no accident that this young unchurched couple randomly arrived in my yard on a hot August afternoon. It is no accident that they needed a ride in my car where a Bible and a rosary were catalysts to a conversation about Jesus. It is no accident that the seed of faith was planted through a set of circumstances that were orchestrated by the Spirit. And the bonus...it is no accident that Our Lord heard my prayer and my grass was cut through the kindness of a stranger.

The church of Jesus Christ was built on the faith of Peter and it continues to build on the faith of those who believe, follow, and spread the Good News!