



Thoughts on the Journey...

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One evening, when watching television, I remember flipping through the channels. I came across a show that people mentioned to me as a *must-see-to-*

believe program. I was immediately intrigued. Folks were right; I could hardly believe what I was seeing. I likened it to slowing down to look at a car wreck. The show's content had me transfixed and I wondered how people could live with that much disorder in their lives. The show was "Hoarders" which showcased the psychological disorder of compulsive hoarding.

In this particular case, after the death of her mother, a woman in her mid-40's began to collect and hoard everything she could get her hands on: magazines, newspapers, things bought from yard sales, old food containers... you name it and it landed somewhere in her house. There were towering piles of useless items that made most of her living space uninhabitable. She had to create pathways to get from one room to the next. The conditions were so deplorable that the health and welfare authorities had to be notified because she had her child living in that squalor along with her. Other family members had made attempts to help her clean up, but she refused to let go of anything; she held a death grip on all of her possessions, regardless of the value. She could not see the disorder that everyone else could clearly see. This poor woman had imprisoned herself in this fortress of 'junk' to the point where she was alienating people she loved. She herself seemed to be miserable. It was as though she was collecting these things to fill the void that her mother's death had created: a misguided effort to surround herself with things that she thought could bring her security and contentment. The key to her freedom and happiness was in letting go of the mounds of junk she was collecting.

Most of us can look at this woman's situation and clearly see the dysfunction and disorder. Most of us would not allow our homes to be cluttered to the extent where authorities had to be called. (although I have often hoped the Board of Health wouldn't pay me a surprise visit on some days) Most of us will take action when things have gone too far.

But, what about our *inner-home* - our spiritual indwelling? How many unresolved layers of hurts, jealousies, angers, resentments, and the like, have we collected over the years? How much ugly rubbish do we cling to for fear of letting go? These are the very things that can end up defining who we are and will be the very things that will make us spiritually immobile. It will bind our feet and trip us we try to move toward a deeper relationship with God.

This week, we celebrate the feast of The Most Holy Trinity. It's difficult to wrap our heads around this mystery, especially as it relates to God residing within us in such a profound way.

Jesus tells us clearly that he will not leave us orphans; he is in his Father and we are in Jesus and Jesus is in us. He told his apostles, and he tells us,

“All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me...behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

It is the Trinity that wants to be our guests and dwell within us. But how well do we prepare our inner homes for these divine in-dwellers? What is lining the walls of our souls? What are we willing to let go of in order to keep our spiritual dwelling worthy of our God?

Keeping God's word requires that we make a personal effort to rid ourselves of the things that are not of love - not of God. Granted, it's hard work to forgive, to make peace with people we have been at war with, to let go of our pride that keeps us from healing, to wipe the bitterness from our hearts, but the work of cleaning house is less demanding if we do it on a consistent basis. It is more manageable when we refuse to cling to things that will create decay in our souls. The more we let go of the things that are not of God, the more clear our path on the journey of faith.

Like the woman who was hoarding, the more we cling to rubbish, the more difficult it is to walk toward our Lord. Jesus promises us peace if we create an environment of love within: Love of God, Love of neighbor, Love of self. Let's make a warm welcoming home for the Trinity.