

## Liturgy Matters: Conversion Readiness

As I reflect on the turning points or conversion experiences of my life, several constants from the rather diverse experiences emerge; most of the experiences that led to conversion were not planned for; most of the experiences involved an experience of pain or woundedness; in all of these transforming experiences there were present to me people of faith who helped me find meaning, hope and new life in apparent nonsense, confusion, or suffering.

Conversion cries out for community, presumably a people that will nurture the process. Most of us are reluctant to share our suffering or wounds. Yet there is much faith-filled mentoring possible. Instead people write off these transforming experiences as *bad luck* instead of hearing God's voice in an invitation to conversion. God communicates truth through such experiences. But the divine self-communication is missed for want of a translator, a mediator, a sacramental presence representing God and the faith community.

I believe a great deal of the mediation and mentoring needed for conversion can be done in small groups. But so few of our parishioners join in these intentional small groupings. Despite the parishioners affinity to the church, there is little involvement. National averages suggest that more than 75% of parishioners attend worship services and nothing more. What are the other 25% getting? Do you want some of it? I suggest that God is calling out to be a mentor and to be mentored. If you're in the 25% tell others of the graces you receive, and if you're among the 75% give one of the intentional groups a try.

More about evangelization next week.

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