

The Sharing Org

Ministry to the Adult Foster Care Community

March 1, 2011

MINISTRY MOMENT

I read a book to my kids the other day. It was called “Let Me Hold You Longer” by Karen Kingsbury. It was one of those books that you read to your kids that make your eyes moist. It was one of those books that will make your mom, your aunts, and your grandma cry when you bring it to the next family gathering and read it aloud. It is one of those books that digs deep into your soul and makes you think that kids actually grow up too fast. While it is not my intention to promote a book in this Ministry Moment, if you have kids it really is a must-read.

Anyway...

I’ve been thinking about my treasured past events and their distant memories as of late which has lead me to thinking about the variety of past lives that make up the people whom I visit with each week. It’s always fun to hear about the memories of the residents and so I want to share one of them with you now.

Sally...

Sally’s hair whipped wildly as she and her husband drove southwest in their 1929 convertible Ford coupe. Her hair was long then – without the slightest trace of gray. The car was their very first purchase as a young married couple and it was that car that symbolized the memories that Sally had of her husband. The couple was driving southwest from Michigan’s Upper Peninsula to go to a campground on the shore of Lake Michigan – a week’s camping trip before he was scheduled to leave for The War. Her hair was whipping partly because their car was a convertible, but mostly (if truth be told) because the roads were nothing more than ruts in those days and not only was her hair whipping, but her spine was jolting and her teeth were clanking as well.

Sally fondly remembers that week. She said that she hated it at that time because the menfolk were proudly patting each other on the back for enlisting for The War while the womenfolk were left to manage things for themselves under the constant fear that their menfolk would never be returning home. When she thought back on that week away at the campground she recalls it with a mournful tenderness of one who remembers a friend who has passed some time ago. Sally said that her husband used a sheet of canvas connected to the car and two sticks as poles for their tent shelter, they didn’t take much in the way of food because he had a fishing pole, and they travelled light because it was July and the weather agreeable.

They spent their days enjoying one another. They swatted the black flies that bit by day and the mosquitoes that bit by night. They also spent the majority of their days at a local housing establishment as the weather was a bit cooler than they had planned on and the fish were not actually biting. Sally laughed as she told me that it took only two nights before her husband gave into the notion that the camping trip would be best enjoyed on a full tummy and in a warm bed.

I once asked a man about his time in the nursing home. He expressed how each and every day for him was a time of regret as he had oodles and oodles of time to remember the last time that he did this or didn’t do that with his wife, his children, and his friends.

When will the last time be that you we this or *not* do that with our loved ones?

Today, when I hug my 2-year-old, she does the obligatory hug thing and then struggles to break free from me so that she can go on her way. Mournfully I contemplate this and I wonder if this isn't how God often feels with me.

~John

Prayer...

Dear Prayer Partner,

Happy March!!! Why is it happy? Because we've tasted a little spring last week and the Winter is mostly over. So join me now as we sing the Doxology – everybody! *And-a-one-and-a-two-and-a....* Not feeling it, huh? Alrighty then, we don't have to sing together. ☺

Please pray for me as I have all of a sudden gotten really busy. As you may (or may not) know, I prepare taxes to help offset the financial obligation of the ministry. This is the second year that I am doing it professionally and I've actually gotten busy. Busy enough that my wife might decide that this endeavor isn't just my "happy little hobby." Please pray for me as I juggle all the responsibilities of the ministry and client obligations without dropping the ball on any of it. I enjoy being busy and I am very grateful to God for the business so I just pray for his strength that I will do all my work well.

Also, the service group at our church is scheduling something with me to go to one of the homes to do something special with the residents. All of the details are not yet finalized but it looks as though April 9th is the date. Please pray the service group would bless the residents and be blessed by the residents as well. I always like hearing the reactions of people when they serve in an AFC home because it is never what they had anticipated. Please pray that the people who come will internalize the need for ministry to the AFC homes.

Well, I'm going to close here for now. There are probably a dozen more things that I need to ask you to pray with me about but for the life of me I cannot think of another one right now. I think my mind is occupied with busy.

As I wrap up, I want you to know the very real impact that you are making in the lives of the people whom I serve. Do you understand that were it not for you individually, and corporately, bathing us with prayer and supporting us financially that the majority of the people would have nothing to look forward to each week? Ok, maybe I exaggerate a little, I do know that the hospice nurse and the foot doctor visit periodically, but as far as spiritual encouragement goes – *nada*. There are things in our lives that we are a part of but our involvement is not *vital* to the success of the mission. Well, your involvement with The Sharing Org is not one of those non-essential areas in your life, because you are absolutely vital to us – thank you for continuing to pray with us in this very small but important call of God.

Until next month,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John R. Rock". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John