

MM Winter Blue Sheet # 5 — February 2015

Morgan's Moment...

Saturday Farmer's Market...
Should we go?
we don't need anything.
Undecided already in town...
yes...no...maybe...
I just decide to go.
Why are we doing this?
parking and walking
bantering our way along.
A friend has had a space for years...
we stop to banter...
Jean asks "How's your wife?"
So Jean turns banter into a "moment"
from frivolity into reality...
from casual into personal.
She evokes interest and sincerity...
he opens his heart and feelings...
his wife is not doing well.
Parkinson's and dementia
plus other problems...
more than he can handle alone.
His eyes are at the edge of watery...
as he talks about two children
whose support he counts on.
He is hanging on
helped by counseling
and his small business.
Jean listens his heartache into silence...
a lingering hug says all
that is left to say.
I said to Jean as we left...
"I guess this is why
we came here to today."
— Art Morgan

BOOK CORNER

Here's a small book worth the time and interest of any who are interested in historic background to present day religious practice and thought.

The book is "A MEDEIVAL OMNIBUS — Sources in Medieval European History," by Professor Clifford R. Backman, Boston Univ.

I was immediately attracted to the book when I read the preface on "How to read a Primary Source." He encourages critical thinking as he revisits early and medieval documents of important and interesting events that relate to church history. Very readable.

HOME ON THE RANGE—A New Addition to Your Hymnal

O give me a home, where the buffalo roam,
where the deer and the antelope play,
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word,
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

"Where seldom is heard a discouraging word..." Why that came into my mind this morning I'm not sure. Maybe from my dawn-time habit of listening to NPR before I get up. One word summarizes it: *Discouraging*.

The news from around the world for last night—or almost every night—is nothing but *discouraging*.

News is chilling and gruesome. Sad and disgusting. Tragic and desperate. Still more beheadings!

This song comes almost like a prayer of longing:

O Lordy, "Give me a home...where seldom is heard a *discouraging word*..." Wouldn't that be lovely, I think, as I put my feet on the floor. O Lordy indeed!

I begin to think of people I may bump into today. The dental assistant who is to clean my teeth. The girl who knows my coffee order before I can say a word. The guy who has the job of cleaning the rest rooms at Safeway. The girl working outdoors in the cold pumping gas. (We aren't allowed to pump our own gas in Oregon).

I don't know much about what's going on inside their minds. I don't know their hopes or worries, whether they have had a good night, are happy or depressed. What I do know is that everyone I will meet needs an encouraging word.

We all need to hear an encouraging word.

Lest I turn this into a black hole, I remind myself that the world I live in is actually generally encouraging.

The coffee girl wishes me a good day with a smile, and says it like she means it. The dental assistant checks my teeth and compliments me encouragingly. Yes, I will keep on flossing.

I compliment the fellow cleaning the men's rest room. He gives me a big "thank you" and smile. I see a lady with three kids trying to get them and her grocery cart through the door where a young man stops to assist her and comments on her nice kids which lights up her face. Cars even stop at the crosswalk encouraging us tottering seniors safe passage. Our financial advisor just called with more encouraging words.

I heard encouraging words whenever I paid attention. Really, there are lots of encouraging words out there.

We have a longing for such a world. Christendom's most prayed prayer has a petition with the words "*Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*" My take-away from this is that we humans are to live for the kind of world where discouraging words are not necessary.

For heaven's sake I'll try not to speak any discouraging word.

My vow for today is to find ways to speak an encouraging word where ever I can.

I think I'll practice on my wife.

For the Moment...Art Morgan, February 28, 2015