

Morgan's Moment...

"How's it going today?"...

my question at Farmer's Market
on a sunny Saturday morning.

"Probably not very good crowds...
usually not good on sunny days...
better when it rains."

I could see a face-off here...

the merchant with beef to sell
wants rain to bring him buyers.

"But I need sun so I can mow...
the grass has been so wet
the mower can't get through."

He smiled...

"I need rain, you need sun."
a thoughtful pause...

"You know what Art?...
it's nothing either of us
can do anything about."

"You're right Ed...
weather is hard to change...
so what's left?"

"We just have to suck it up
and chill out."

A farmer's life philosophy?
or practical psychology?
or bottom line theology?

There are times in life
to just suck it up
and chill out.

Art Morgan

BOOK CORNER

My pre-Easter reading has been so heavy that I weighed all the books scattered around my desks before restoring them to shelves.

They weighed 25 and ½ pounds!

Some clergy these days do much of their reading on-line. You can find more than you need or want on internet.

Some of these books are old friends, full of marks and notes. Some are more recent, like those from the Jesus Seminar. "What Jesus Really Said" and "What Jesus really Did" are two examples.

While you can get information more rapidly by internet, I find reading helps me think myself along better.

DOING EASTER ONE MORE TIME

A few months ago Paul and I announced that we were not going to do Advent, Christmas Eve or Easter again.

We lied. We did Easter again. Who knows about next year?

I can't say that we did anything new or very different. But we did use a lot of Marcus Borg. Even sang a favorite hymn, "Be Thou My Vision"

Borg was launched into fame from Corvallis. He was in the Philosophy and Religion Department at Oregon State University.

A state university is not the first place that comes to mind for the launching of a renowned and famous career in religion.

It was assisted by the gift of a lot of money by one man who wanted the teaching of Borg spread. Marcus was a quiet, thoughtful, clear teacher. 100's of thousands heard him gladly. Well, some weren't as glad as others. But he was so well known that any major conference hoping for a crowd made an effort to have Marcus Borg as one of the speakers.

Marcus died on January 21. I felt like I wanted to remember him on the day we celebrated the Jesus that Marcus introduced to many in his book, "Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time."

He confessed that his was not new scholarship. He, along with the work of the Jesus Seminar scholars, just made the scholarship more understandable and available. He helped people see beyond and above a strictly literal way of reading the Bible.

Marcus Borg offered his students a window into the Bible and religion as they had never heard it in their churches or anywhere else. He couldn't be fired for dealing openly with scholarship surrounding stories like the creation story, the Garden of Eden, the virgin birth, the miracles or even the resurrection.

He could say that he didn't know what happened to Jesus' body, that the reports were not what could be captured on a video camera, that the resurrection was not the resuscitation of a corpse. He taught of other ways to understand what people believed and felt. He taught us how to look at the Easter tomb story and roll away the stone and get to the intended meaning—the earliest creedal beliefs about Jesus after "Easter."

He saw a lot about biblical story as parable and metaphor, and higher meaning of words like "risen" and "not here" and "see."

I concluded our Easter by reading what Borg said about the meaning of Easter:

"It is not about heaven. It is about the transformation of this world. Jesus was killed because of his passion for a different kind of world. Easter is about God's "Yes" to what we see in Jesus. Easter is not about believing in a spectacular long ago event, but about participating in what we see in Jesus. Crucifixion and the tomb didn't stop him. Easter is about saying "Yes" to the passion of Jesus. He's still here, still recruiting." (Marcus Borg)

And Marcus, like Jesus, is still here, still teaching.

— Art Morgan