



DISABILITIES MINISTRY

"And when they could not bring [the paralyzed man] to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him..." — Mark 2:3-4 (paraphrased)

REFLECTION

Being a Helper

Being a helper is one of the roles in which our son Andrew, born with neurological challenges, takes great interest and joy. It reminds me of the little boy who brought the basket of bread and fish when he came with his family to hear Jesus preach that day, little anticipating the significance of his small lunch.

It was the disciple Andrew (!) who noticed the boy's small lunch. He felt it was important to mention this to Jesus, but not without the caveat that there were only five barley loaves and 2 fishes! The quantity clearly didn't bother Jesus as he lifted up even these small items to feed his followers and fulfill his mission.

As I reflect on Andrew's life I realize that he plays a key role in many situations, without even knowing it. His enthusiasm – holding the door open for others or bringing in the firewood or drying the dishes – brings joy, extends hospitality, provides help and facilitates interaction. We have learned that while sometimes we think we should hold him back, people respond to him.

As happens in many congregations following worship, the church that I once pastored had a tradition of greeting the pastor at the back of the sanctuary. One morning a woman related that she had had a wonderful worship experience that day. I thought perhaps she had enjoyed the choir or (hopefully!) the sermon. But no, she said that she had simply looked at Andrew and her world seemed to come back into focus.

We might think that someone with limitations is also limited in what they have to offer. But Andrew's message is that this is just not true. Whether he knows it or not, he is in there playing the role Jesus has for him, just like the boy with his lunch. Jesus calls on us all to use our gifts.

We can each offer Jesus just what we have, humbly. Jesus can use what we have and multiply it for God's glory and for the good of others. We are all needed as God's helpers. Andrew points us to that realization every day.

~~ David S. Young

Disabilities Awareness Month

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