

GLIMPSE

Happy New Year

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Because we wish completion, wholeness and perfection, when we come to an end of something rather important we can experience a kind of sadness. These days everything has a syndrome. Termination syndrome can swoop upon us as we end this elderly year. January is the doorway out of the old and into the new. The name comes from one Latin word for door, "Ianua" as well as from the Roman god Janus who had two faces looking in opposite directions. December gets its name from the Latin word for "ten" when the old, very old calendar had ten months.

Now back to looking back. We can beat this termination sad-drum loud or soft, and we are the only ones who listen to it. We can kick ourselves for not winning at cards, not giving a perfect presentation, not living a good life. We can knot-up ourselves by not-enoughing all we ever do.

Satisfaction is satisfiction! "Satis" is the Latin word for "enough" and it seems that whatever good we would like to do, well the gooder it is, the more of the good we want to do. That right there is the fiction, the dream, because even if we could do the good gooder, we would still judge it not enough! "Better" is an invitation, an urging toward our revealing God's goodness through our not-being God. We would like to be what we are not; God. We are not-gods and our "factions" our "doings" will always reveal that apparently sad fact.

I personally have the opportunity to give many homilies, talks, classes. I write these little Glimpses and I have learned about listening to this sin-drum beating the dance of my personal ego. Yup, my ego causes me my sadness. I hear others telling me how good the talk was, how helpful the homily was, but my ego-buddy beats the drum even harder telling me that they don't know how good you could be and probably will be next time. Even in the middle of a talk I can become frustrated or dispirited, because my enough, 'superific' expectations are not registering on my pride-o-meter. I begin termination by letting the very good, be not good enough.

It is a very good prayer to reflect on this past calendar/chapter of our lives with the sin-drum turned off. It is a "sin" in a small way to be ungrateful for the good, because it wasn't meeting our self-imposed demands. All the could-haves, if-onlys, lead to living a pretty should life and that way is a sin of self-rejection, because God works always through what is, not what ought to be.

Janus has two faces and we have one. Janus opens the door into the new and asks us to let go of the long-face of disappointment and to drop that drum, because it can be too large to get through the door into the new, the next. So have a happy new ear for listening to the just very good we do and laugh a little at how whimperingly our egos try to beat that old-ear drum. It is just a glimpse backward and forward into the good.