

Pastor's Column

Rev. Michael Ratajczak
michaelr@stmoside.org
760-758-4100 x100

Companions for the Journey

As we go about life and as we try to assist one another in the ways of holiness, how do we “see” each other?

Do we see the other as a friend, a companion?

Or do we see the other as a person that needs “fixing”?

So much is in the attitude with which we see.

I share with you the thoughts of Alan D. Wolfelt, the founder and director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition (www.centerforloss.com):

...the word “companion,” when broken down into its original Latin roots means “messmate”: “com” for “with” and “pan” for “bread,” someone you would share a meal with, a friend, an equal. I have taken liberties with the noun “companion” and made it into the verb “companioning” because it so well captures the type of counseling relationship I support and advocate.

More specifically, for me, “companioning” is about:

- * *Honoring the spirit; it is not about focusing on the intellect.*
- * *Curiosity; it is not about expertise.*
- * *Learning from others; it is not about teaching them.*
- * *Walking alongside; it is not about leading.*

- * *Being still; it is not about frantic movement forward.*
- * *Discovering the gifts of sacred silence; it is not about filling every painful moment with words.*
- * *Listening with the heart; it is not about analyzing with the head.*
- * *Bearing witness to the struggles of others; it is not about directing those struggles.*
- * *Being present to another person’s pain; it is not about taking away the pain.*
- * *Respecting disorder and confusion; it is not about imposing order and logic.*
- * *Going to the wilderness of the soul with another human being; it is not about thinking you are responsible for finding the way out.*

Our Church and our World would be gentler and more loving environments if we chose to companion one another more, rather than always trying to impose our order on one another and always trying to provide the “magic fix.”

Let us be companions for the journey!

Fr. Mike