



June 20, 2021

"THE HOLY KISS"**Excerpt from 2 Corinthians 13:11-13**

"Greet one another with a holy kiss. "

**Reflection by Ron Buford**

Each morning, my Dad put on a pot of coffee, shaved, showered, and was at the breakfast table by 6:30 a.m. He poured a cup of Maxwell House coffee, opened the well-worn family Bible, struggling over its words...because as an African American born in the South in 1913, he only got a third grade education though he still came to great biblical understanding. After praying, he'd kiss my sleeping Mom good-bye. Then he'd come to my room, gently opening my bedroom door, as the dog, who knew she wasn't supposed to be on the bed, jumped to the floor, scooting under the bed. Pretending to be asleep, I'd lay there as Dad kissed my forehead, leaving behind the smell of Old Spice aftershave before punctually starting the car at 7 a.m. He did this for as long as I can remember, even during my summers home from college...until I left home.

How precious the memories of that "Holy Kiss." I still keep a bottle of Old Spice around just to remind me. And whenever I see a blue can of Maxwell House..."good to the last drop," I think of Dad.

Many men are not strong like my Dad, able to be a "man" and yet tender. Far too many women, men, boys, and girls are terrified at the thought of their Dad opening their bedroom door because some Dads or other father figures have violated the sacred trust between a father and his child. Most of those terrified in this way find it difficult if not impossible to approach God as Father, Divine Dad or Parent.

But I am happy to say that this is not the case with most Dads whom we celebrate today — those whose gentle kisses are holy, wholesome, and healing...forever.

Happy Father's Day, Daddy!

Recap of PSEC Annual Spring Meeting

Our virtual Annual Spring Conference Meeting closed Saturday afternoon after thought-provoking conversations with Sister Simone Campbell (Friday), small group conversations in Meet Ups and workshops, meaningful worship with inspirational music from soloists and choirs from around the Conference, and a chance to explore what new on-line practices we need to continue (or adopt) as we move into the future. We recognized the significant anniversaries of churches and pastors. We celebrated the generosity of our congregations who have helped us surpass our OCWM budget so far this year as well as those congregations that are "5 for 5"!

Our meeting theme, "Deepening Connections, Deepening the Journey", was born from conversations about our pandemic induced disconnection and our strong desire to restore community — especially amid the vitriol and division that characterizes our public discourse. "We are the antidote to hostile conversations," Sister Simone said, "for the ways that our faith lives, and prayer lives, help us to listen and to touch the pain of the world. Not fix it [the world's pain] but touch it and be touched by it." Jesus is calling us, as he regularly does, to venture out into the world and engage in difficult conversations; to leave behind the expectation that the world will come to church; to join the great migration into the digital world.

Our meeting could not have happened without the hard work of our Annual Meeting Planning Team, the Worship Planning Team, and the Conference Staff — especially Susan Creswell and the members of our Tech Team who did amazing work managing countless details so we could meet. And I want to thank you, my friends, especially those of you who hung in for the duration of both days, left your video camera on (for most of that time), and actively participated in conversations with friends old and new. We are stronger together!

I can't wait to be together again and pray that God keep you safe and well in the meantime.

Grace and Peace,

- Pastor Bill
 Rev. Bill Worley, Conference Minister

