

Karolyn McBride's Lenten reflection

Ephesians 4: 1-4 and 11-16

This passage from Ephesians causes me to reflect on my personal journey toward embracing my life as a Christian and finding my way to the Catholic Church..

My reflection could be titled, **Where I've found WOW along my faith journey!**

I was baptized as an infant and we went to church on Christmas and Easter. We thanked God for our food and each other before meals. There was a period of Sunday school where I learned that Jesus loves me. I learned the Lord's Prayer and was fascinated, yet fearful of the Lord God whose love is so powerful **He can literally save my life.**

Some of my childhood friends were Catholic and I remember them going to CCD. I'd go along to mass after a sleep over when I could. I wanted to make sense of the kneeling and standing, the singing and ceremony. By the time I graduated from high school, I believed in God and Jesus but I also felt that I was on the outside looking in. I didn't know how I was to go about **getting in with GOD.** ...

I have always been thrilled and amazed by stories of people who are lucky enough to **get the call** from God, then drop everything to become apostles of the Lord. I've personally known a couple of these people.

About 20 years ago, my dad's friend, Denny got "**the call**" to follow Christ". Denny had what seemed to be a decent job at the same company where my dad worked and I'd met him, his wife Jackie and their five little kids. When God called, neither Denny nor Jackie hesitated. Denny quite his job, they sold the house and Jackie and the kids moved back to her parents' so Denny could begin necessary schooling to become a leader in their church. **WOW!** What exactly did God say?

And there's Carolyn N., a colleague who **I** worked with in the publishing industry for about a decade. Carolyn had a strong Catholic faith and we sometimes discussed my desire to forge a stronger connection with the Lord.. About two years ago I saw Carolyn at a company function for the last time. She told me she'd gotten **THE CALL**.. She was leaving publishing to begin training to become **a nun**. My response was sheer joy for her. But also **WOW!** This woman was my peer. Nearly my AGE. **What exactly did He SAY!?!??**

When I was 30, I met my future husband. I know that the Catholic faith he was raised with was an important part of the reason I was attracted to him. His is a family that takes from the church and gives back to the church as a matter of course. No airs. No judgments. No preferred seating. Just the desire to spread God's gifts around for the honor of serving the Lord. The whole family embraced me. **WOW!**

Kevin and I decided to raise our children in the Catholic faith and we began attending mass at St. Ann's. Charitable actions, a loving environment, and friendly faces at donut hour encouraged me and I eventually found my way to the RCIA program with Father Drea. I became a Catholic at the Easter Vigil, 2005.

For me, there has not been one dramatic and fateful **call from God**. Rather simple gestures from other Catholics living faith filled lives delivering God's message to me regularly. Evangelists, right here at St Ann's reaching out, encouraging me to take my place within the body of Christ. "Pray with us." "Join this group"  
"Deliver a supportive message" "Give what you can" "Invite your friends"  
**WOW!**

Bringing my faith into the Catholic Church opened my eyes to the fact that **today is the right time for me to take my place within the body of Christ**. And the gifts God bestowed upon me are all I need to contribute. These are basic teachings, yet it took years for me to see how these truths apply to me.

Quite messages delivered through regular Christians all through my life encouraged me to keep my heart open. The Catholic Church and the St Ann's community have provided a frame for me to "get in with God". My faith has opened my eyes to my rightful place, and to the work I am meant to do.

Let's take a few minutes to reflect on the ways God's message gets through to each of us, and His invitation to take our places within him.