

## Vestry Reflection January 2019 – godwinks

Squire Rushnell (former television executive, author, and inspirational speaker) believes that “every time you receive what some call a coincidence or an answered prayer, it’s a direct and personal message of reassurance from God to you.” He calls this a “godwink”. We experience moments when we feel things have worked themselves out at the right time or someone shows up right when we are thinking about them. We may characterize these incidents as coincidences. But if we stop, slow down, and take a deeper look, I, like Rushnell, think it may be God’s direct presence in the midst of our daily lives.

During the past year, I attempted to be more mindful, listen a bit better and notice some of the godwinks in my own life. I share some of them with you in hopes that you, too, may be able to slow down and recognize your own godwinks!

- As I was quietly sitting one morning wondering what I was going to write for Vestry, the idea for this reflection randomly found its way into my mind. Upon further thought, WAS it random or a nudge from God?
- Due to the death of my friend’s dog, she had to spontaneously cancel a trip to the Christmas markets in Germany this past December. In later listening to the news she found that she would have been in Strasbourg, France around the time of the terror shooting. The cancellation of her trip was a godwink for sure.

At school I often experience godwinks with my students and staff. Here are a few:

- Students are encouraged to turn in “Wishes” they would like granted. After having a very difficult day at school I found out that same evening that a student requested her “Wish” to be a day spent at school with me!
- I received an email at work telling me about a death of a beloved bus driver/lunch aide. As I was sadly digesting this news, a colleague “just happened to” knock on my door and gave me a big hug and words of encouragement. And within that same week, another beloved bus driver/lunch aide returned from months of medical leave bringing me much joy. Was the timing of all this a coincidence? I think not!

- Every four years we have to be intensely observed and evaluated at work. It is a stressful process which I am going through right now with an administrator observing me teaching a classroom guidance lesson, working with individual students as well as with families. My godwink today was recognizing I do not need to be nervous giving this Vestry reflection (as I usually am) since I am surrounded by compassionate, non-judgmental people who care about me and are just listening, not critiquing me.

At home my husband and I have experienced godwinks:

- My husband lost his wedding ring somewhere in our house. It was not to be found until I had a godwink that it was in the clothes he was donating to Midnight Run. We were both relieved to find the ring right where I “felt” it would be.
- My husband and I were feeling desperate and scared and in need of some intervention about a very serious situation. Suddenly the phone rang with the help we needed and had been praying for! I always say that God called and we answered!

And finally:

- My finding St. Francis was a godwink. A friend had visited St. Francis during a trip up from FL and mentioned to me that people were very friendly and welcoming. As I was looking for a new spiritual home, I decided to try coming to a service...and never left! I am convinced God was directly involved in bringing me to this parish through a suggestion of a visitor.

I think we are surrounded by godwinks but often miss them due to busyness or lack of attention. Practicing meditation and trying to be more mindful have helped me be more aware of each present moment. Living in the past or looking to the future too much does not allow me to experience what is right in front of me. The more I am able to live in the present moment, the more godwinks I have been able to recognize. It is important to notice, and thoroughly absorb, these positive experiences in our lives. As Rick Hanson writes in Hardwiring Happiness, “a few times a day, a dozen seconds at a time we need to take in the good, which will

naturally grow more joy, calm, and strength inside you"... and allow us to be open to all of the godwinks abundantly sent to us.