

Order 297

By Marty Coffin Evans

Who knew what would happen from ordering a cup of coffee at McDonalds? Little did I know, stopping by between appointments recently, paying my 54 cents and heading out the door with my coffee, would result in an unexpected conversation, including a trip down memory lane.

I heard my name called that morning as I headed toward my car. When I turned to see who was calling me, the lady said, "St. Aidan's." Okay, I thought, but I couldn't bring a name to mind. When I suggested we talk in the shade she countered with, "come inside and talk with us," which I did.

As we headed in to join her friend, she kept trying to remember my last name and if it had changed. After introducing her friend, she began to talk about my late husband Father Ray Smith, who'd served as the interim priest at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church for about four months in 2005. For her, he was the most wonderful priest, whose sermons she really enjoyed. She missed him and them.

Hearing her comments about Ray's influence prompted me to tell some of his memories of St. Aidan's. Maybe it was memories from a recent trip on the Columbia River that prompted me to tell several stories about Ray's Oregon life. Those included his time living in a houseboat on the Columbia, along with being thrown out of an open roadster at Cannon Beach. That sand, ingested during that experience, stayed with him during his life time.

This newly reconnected friend remembered I'd remarried, along with my connection with music and CU. She was pleased to know my spouse was still living. Me too. I only wish I could remember this woman's name after she told me.

"I need to leave for my appointment," I said to these table mates. With good wishes and much gratitude on my part, I headed to my car with my cup of coffee.

How often in life do we leave an impression? I thought Ray would be so pleased to know he was fondly remembered after 21 years and the short time at that church.

Within the next two days I happened upon writings that touched on how we make a difference in another's life perhaps without knowing so. Mattering does matter, whether known at the time or later from comments made or support shown.

I'm tempted to return another Monday morning about 9-ish to see if the ladies are there drinking their coffee. Perhaps we could share more memories.

My coffee would still be 54 cents although the order number would be different. Just possibly returning to do so would spoil that serendipitous time.

