

By Pat Haggerty

I just looked at the document file for my blogs and realized that I've been writing them for two years. I never thought, when I started, that I could keep the momentum going for this long. Where would I get my ideas? How could I stay fresh?

Well, writing a blog---or writing anything, for that matter---takes much reflection. As a former English teacher, I'd say that I spend a lot of time on brainstorming and pre-writing before I even begin. The writing process isn't always easy, but it does become more doable once the writer finds her groove.

Fortunately, I think I've found mine. As for the pre-writing, it comes in many forms. I get my inspiration from personal events, scripture and other readings of all kinds. Sometimes the inspiration can be serendipitous. For example, when I thought of writing about service for this blog, I was touched by inspiration from all three fronts. That is definitely serendipity!

This coming weekend I will be giving a keynote address on "service" for a group of high school girls involved in a week-long program on government. So the idea of service has been on my mind. A few days ago, I received a link in a Facebook entry for ServiceNation. On that page was a quote by Mahatma Gandhi: "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." Hence, this was reinforcement for the idea of service. Finally, the gospel reading for the Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time tells of Jesus eating at the home of a Pharisee. When Jesus was at the table a woman came to Him and washed His feet with her

tears and dried them with her hair. This is a touching example of not only her love for Jesus but of her desire to serve Him.

I think it is very important that we each think of the role service plays in our own lives. What are we doing to help others? Are we living the Beatitudes? Are we generous with our time and talents? Just pondering these three questions can be an important exercise for us. Take some time to think about service. Then, be of service!

Let me leave you with my favorite quote by Albert Schweitzer: “I don’t know what your destiny will be, but the one thing I know; the only ones among you who will really be happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve.”