

GOD'S FINGERPRINTS

It's funny how God works. It's usually not at all the way we expect. Often it's what people tend to call "coincidence." Others call it "God working anonymously." A few examples:

The woman who started and has been leading our Children's Liturgy of the Word program "just happened" to attend Mass at a church near her home and heard Father Jim talk about the ministries at St. Leo's. "Is there anything for me to do there?" she asked. She was instrumental in setting up that very successful children's program.

Recently a couple "just happened" to attend Mass at one of our partner parishes the week a flyer about our ministries was inserted in the bulletin. We now have two new volunteers for our food pantry which serves over 1,000 people each month.

Years ago one of the staff was given clothing in an unusual size by the family of a woman who recently died. The staff member didn't know who would benefit from this gift, but she was sure God did. A few days later a woman came to the door that had lost everything in a fire. You guessed it—she wore that exact size and walked away with a whole new wardrobe.

We needed an ESL teacher for the Thursday women's group and had no prospects. Our outreach nurse mentioned this at a Christmas party and one of her daughter's friends suggested contacting her mother who taught ESL. Her mom's been with us now for a couple years and is an enthusiastic, compassionate teacher.

Ask anyone at St. Leo's and they will tell you of similar experiences. But St. Leo's hasn't cornered the market on God's wonderful interventions in our lives. Our God loves us beyond imagining and desires to be intimately involved with us. God is a passionate lover and likes to

sneak love note experiences in our lives just like we put them in our children's lunches to remind them that we're always thinking of them. If we who are limited do that, just imagine how much God who dreamed us, formed us, and breathed us into life wants us to know we are cherished and loved. It's truly mind-blowing.

My sister died of cancer when my second son was an infant. She lived in another state and I wasn't able to talk or visit as frequently as I would have liked. After her death I struggled with wanting to know what was going on in her spirit as she was facing death. It wasn't something I wanted to ask other family members in their grief so I tried to stuff it down, but it wouldn't go away. One day a package arrived from my brother-in-law. It contained packet of things she had written before her death. "Somehow I thought you might want to see these," he had said. I read, I cried, and healing came. When I asked him later why he sent them, he told me he just had a sudden sense that I needed to read them. I believe God nudged him to send them.



Not everything is as dramatic as those mentioned above but I believe that God's fingerprints are everywhere if we but open our spirit eyes to see—in a morning sunrise, the crunch of leaves on a fall day, a baby's grin. And when we see them, we are grateful and say thanks. And our relationship deepens. Like the branches in John chapter 15 we become more rooted in the vine. And as we choose to "remain" united to that vine we enter even more deeply into God's loving embrace. Living there becomes a habit and as a wise friend of mine once said, we "abide in love—each precious now."

—Angela Anno, Pastoral Associate