

## **Before the Flood, Gratefully**

One habit to which I attribute any good that comes from me is abiding before the Crucified. Each morning I awake to a Franciscan cross from which the flood of God's mercy--blood, water and Spirit—flows graciously into an otherwise dry and stingy vessel. I remind myself that 'without Him I can do nothing' (JN 14:4). True that--don't even try. Almighty God became a humble gift so I could be a good gift to others...nothing better. I then savor His gift to me in the Eucharist.

It's not because I am dutiful that I pray and partake of daily mass; it's because I am desperate. People like me who almost died due to bad habits and who can still hear sin's drumbeat on the door need the daily gift of God in Christ. He is so willing, so kind; Jesus delights in availing Himself yet again to the hungry who want to feed others but who know that divine bread must be acquired daily.

So here's to good habits that bring His presence near. He loves to come because He loves it when my wife gets a husband composed by divine love. I can help secure her in love when I am not obsessed with other hungers. Before the flood, I am well-fed and watered, gratefully.

My four kids, three daughters-in-law, and one grandchild on the way (yeah, it's true) need no primary parenting but they still need us. And that's the rub. We may have concerns but need to pray more than say and do stuff that might encroach on the ground God has given them. So we live before the flood, trusting God with our desires for their good lives. We delight in giving ourselves to these charter members of our home church. Nothing better, thank You God.

And the Desert Stream staff--Annette and I have the privilege of serving daily alongside a committed group of wounded healers who share our 'love of the flood' but who possess backgrounds and brokenness different enough from ours to keep us before the flood. We unite in the belief that our weaknesses are the threshold for God's almighty mercy in the workplace. So we show up with hungry hearts and open hands and ask for the waters to rise among us. We live before the flood, gratefully.

God can withhold the waters whenever He wants. That's the truth. When He deems our non-profit org. unprofitable, DSM is done. In the meantime, we ask for the waters to rise and to water many. We live before the flood, gratefully.