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VICS: Called to BE the Resurrection

Bob Colburn

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He was lying on the side of the road, just off of a busy Managuan intersection. At first I thought that this little boy, no more than 8 years old, in torn and dirty clothes, was dead. I stood by him and recognized with a sigh of relief that he was breathing and that he was sound asleep. I stood there for some time, just staring to make sure that he really was alive.

It was heartbreaking to walk by him. I wondered how he ended up in that place all alone. I wondered what family catastrophe had made him a child of the street, begging for a meager existence. I thought of the great need for an orphanage, how I might give up my work in Canada and start again. I thought of giving him money, of waking him to see if he was hungry. I knew that a few coins thrown to him were not the solution but I felt so helpless as I walked by. I was so overcome by this child’s poverty just as I am when I see the endless television portrayal of children caught in poverty and the announcer’s call to feed this child for “just $1 a day”.

That little boy was not alone. I was deeply struck by the poverty of the street children of Nicaragua. A number of other street children headed my way to see what had caught this white man’s interest. Soon there were more than half a dozen children standing beside me.

Having handed out a few coins to the children I finally left though I knew that it was not an answer — but what is one to do when faced with such stark poverty?

Later that day VICS volunteer Amanda Procter took me to see the real solution to the poverty of these children.

Amanda and I visited a small village that had organized themselves and lobbied the government to increase their school from two classrooms to four. The government promised them teachers and books if the village built the school. And build it they did with the help of Casa Canadiense and a donor in Vancouver. The local people cleared a road for the trucks to bring supplies, prepared the land for the school, fed the workers and helped in the building of this new two-
Transition

Joyce de Gooijer, VICS Director-in-waiting

VICS volunteers — those who have returned, those currently in the field, those getting ready to leave — share a common theme — transition.

Transition — we leave behind familiarity, to be renewed or reborn into a new life, a new belief, or a new response to situations we face.

Transitions may not be easy. I’m reminded of my grandmother who left Poland and traveled to Canada knowing she was coming to marry my grandfather.

What transitions are needed in our lives? — changes in how we think, actions we take, how we spend our time, where we will go or what can we let go of?

I’m reminded of a poem shared at our first VICS orientation over 20 years ago (talk about life transitions since then!). This poem is a call to change, to transition, to “go.” It’s a challenge to stretch our views and beliefs, to help in new ways, to make choices that my not be popular or mainstream, and to trust without having to see.

**And the Lord said, “Go”**

And the Lord said, “Go”
And I said, “Who — me?”
And He said, “Yes — you.”

And I said,
“But I’m not ready yet,
and there is company coming,
and I can’t leave the kids,
and you know there’s no one to take my place.”

And he said, “You’re stalling.”

Again the Lord said, “Go.”
And I said, “But I don’t want to.”

And he said, “I didn’t ask if you wanted to.”

And I said,
“Listen, I’m not that kind of person
to get involved in controversy.
Besides, my family won’t like it
And what will my neighbours think?”

And he said, “Baloney.”

And yet a third time the Lord said, “Go.”
And I said, “Do I have to?”

And he said, “Do you love me?”

And I said,
“Look, I’m scared …
people are going to hate me …
and cut me up in little pieces …
and I can’t take it all by myself.”

And he said, “Where do you think I’ll be?”
And the Lord said, “GO.”
And I sighed, “Here I am, send me.”

... it was the people’s school. You could see the excitement, the ownership, the hope in their eyes.

I believe that each one of us is called to BE the resurrection, to bring life and hope to those around us. This gospel message is for wherever we are serving — overseas, here at home or wherever life takes us. We are truly Easter people, let us live fully in the resurrection bringing life and hope to those around us.