

Sermon The Good Fit

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This is going to be an interactive homily.

Were there any surprises? Did you learn something new about someone here?

How did it feel to share your message?

Who has engaged in a conversation with someone who commented on your tee shirt?

It started with Boston Women's March last spring when

I saw two young boys wearing identical tee shirts saying 'Fight like a girl.'

Would they wear them to school?

Maybe, maybe not;

but they wore them when they wanted to be counted with others.

And I was reminded of a "tee shirt communion"

that my home church in Dedham had a couple of times.

Tee shirts can demonstrate our individuality,

or hide our individuality in the midst of a crowd.

Either way, they say I am here, deal with me.

Tee shirts are public, they are slogans, they are message.

Our tee shirts are proclamation.

Some are funny, some are political,

some are angry, some are sweet and some are profane,

some are informative, some are offensive,

some are from the heart, and some are marketing.

"This is what I want you to know I care about," they say;

whether it's a designer or a declaration.

"This is who I am, this is what I like,

this is how I want you to see me."

"Like me." "Loathe me." "Fear me." "Laugh with me."

Our tee shirt slogans say pay attention.

I may care what you think, or not;

I may want you to accept me or reject me.

If I'm in a crowd, it's accept us or reject us.

But I want you to pay attention.

And tee shirts say a little more.

Dr. Carolyn Mair studies our choices in fashion.

She says that there are basic reasons we choose to wear a slogan tee:

"It does get what you want to say out into the world,

or at least those you interact with,

but there other ways to do this

[I think of broadcasting with a mic or tweeting]
so wearing our concerns on our tees
also says something else," explains Mair.
"It says we're not afraid to make a point in public *and*
that we can handle the feedback or response.
This is particularly true," she says, "for political statements."

We are not *afraid* to make a point in public.
What does that mean?
It means we aren't afraid to engage people with our message;
the message from our hearts.

A message written on our clothing;
yes, we're wearing our hearts on our sleeves.

Do people around us notice what's on our tee shirts?
One study suggests, if they're young adults, less than 50%!
You know who notices what I wear and asks about it?
The sixty and seventy somethings.

I started physical therapy a while back,
and realized I could proclaim every time I went there.
Did I want to? Did I want people to know something about me?
I am more introverted than most, so at first heck no!
But, if there was ever a time when I wanted to shout out against hate,
the time was now.
And what better time than when we're
sitting around chatting with total strangers in shared misery?
And what better company than those of an age to notice?

Why are we so reluctant to proclaim,
to wear our hearts on our sleeves?
It's saying notice me, agree with me, disagree with me.
It's saying talk with me. Ask me. Yell at me. Connect with me.

If there was ever a time to get our message out, the time is now.
You have something to say,
and the hearing of it or the seeing of it or the connecting with it
might just change someone's day.

Something is written anew in life
some bright wedge of freedom
so that we can arrive together.