



St. Matthew's Cathedral eNews

Christ + Compassion + Community

From the Dean

The Real Deal?

Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid his hands on him; and the Israelites obeyed him, doing as the LORD had commanded Moses.
—Deuteronomy 34:9

We live in an age of vicarious participation. That is, rather than experiencing things ourselves, a lot of people want to experience life through other people.

That, I believe, is the secret to the success behind the recent slew of reality shows and the “My-brother-in-law-helped-me-cheat-against-my-wife” shows. People watch those shows with an attitude of: “These things are happening to real people; it could happen to me,” or “Wow, I’m glad my life is not as messed up as his.”

Most of us don’t really have such dysfunctional families (but be careful: chances are that *some* among us do). And, most of us don’t go on the Great Race or have someone remodel our home for free, or blow up our duck blind and put a mobile home in its place.

In our reading from Deuteronomy, Moses was the real deal. And Joshua was the real deal. Here was Moses’ successor, Joshua. Joshua had been tapped as Moses’ successor nearly forty years earlier. Can you imagine what Joshua must have thought, waking up every day, knowing that he would succeed Moses . . . but not today? Yet, throughout those years Joshua remained steadfast. The real deal. So that when it came time for Joshua finally to take his place as leader of the Israelites into the Promised Land, they were willing to follow him. They saw his character day after day. Moses, the real deal, laid his hands on Joshua, also the real deal, and people followed him.

Here at the Cathedral, we are aiming to be the real deal. As we reach out to our neighborhood providing food for the needy through our Food Pantry; clothes at a greatly reduced rate through our Country Fair; teaching English, Spanish, citizenship, and life skills through the Åberg Center; tutoring at Cesar Chavez Learning Center; volunteering at the White Rock Center of Hope; facilitating reading, art, and spiritual formation through our summer Bishop’s Camp; providing comfort through visits, prayers, and presence for friends and parishioners in life’s difficult times—the list could go on - when you do these things, you are being the real deal.

And, yes, when you give to our Capital Campaign, you are being the real deal as well. You are choosing not just to sit and absorb the beauty of worship on a Sunday morning, you are helping St. Matthew’s to be the real deal.