

Day of Recollection – 2/22/2014



I think that the 47 +/- People who came to today's Day of Recollection would agree with me that this day was very special. Our host and mentor was the **Most Reverend Bishop Richard Garcia, R'1967** who set the tone right away with his two-page outline that described our day and our primary theme: **The Four Pillars Revisited.**

- The Spiritual Life
- The Community Life
- The Intellectual Life
- The Apostolic Life

Bishop Richard gave a very candid description of his own journey along the *El Camino* – his own walk (i.e. search) **for spiritual life**. Many of us in attendance found that our own journey was on a parallel course with his.



The connection was through (1) our families, parents and grandparents who set marvelous examples; (2) our seminary connection at Saint Joseph's high school and college including our seminary confessor who walked with us, and (3) the Sulpician fathers who taught us and provided our early spiritual guidance.

Our homework assignment was to be typical of this day. It comprised three questions which we reflected on in silence, then (optionally) discussed with fellow former seminarians whom we knew.



1. Reflect on those people who affected my life. My journey.
2. During my tough times, who supported me?
3. What experiences have influenced me along the way? And what did I learn?

After a break, and a brief discussion about the exercise, Bishop Richard began the second pillar “**Community**” by talking about the Bears (his team), Ramblers, Trojans and Indians – relics from our past.

In his 40 years as a priest, he has lived in 16 different locations. Moving and changing communities is fraught with its own set of difficulties. It is not easy. It affects us, it hinders and it helps a person’s own discovery of God, or the feeling of God in a community. We were encouraged to think about some of the communities we have experienced, and to be thankful for, the presence of other people in our lives.



Our homework assignment after this session asked us to.....

1. Share how one can make transitions from one community (friendship, parish, etc.) to another.
2. How have we found a refuge?
3. What is the greatest gift of my current community?

The “**Intellectual**” pillar has evolved. Google searches and internet information have certainly colored where, and how, we learn, and how we keep ourselves current. We are encouraged to look back upon our teachers and friends who have influenced our academic growth. Bishop Garcia cited certain seminary teachers for their lasting



influence; he also named several pastors who have caused him to reflect upon his own journey and his own desire to be a good shepherd.

The “**Apostolic Life**” pillar focuses on service. In our church the sacrament of confirmation emphasizes the value of service for our young people. Bishop Garcia stated that in his Diocese of Monterey, the confirmation age is 16 which is an older age than many other dioceses. Many Catholic schools require a service commitment of their students. Most of us former seminarians in the room have served others in many ways over the years.

For thoughtful guidance during our day, Bishop Garcia gave us several profound quotes: one from Dag Hammarskjöld about “forgiveness” found in his classic book titled “Markings” (1964); and another quote from Thomas Merton about feeling the presence of God in our lives; and yet another quote from Ron Rolheiser about the importance of Eucharist.

After completing our outlined topics, Bishop Garcia opened the floor for discussion of any topics that we wanted to bring up. With 45-47 former seminarians in the room (I counted twice), there was no shortage of opinions, ideas, concerns, etc. A very lively question and answer session ensued.

Our day ended with mass in the St. Patrick’s chapel.
(no pictures of this)

