

## GOD'S CORNER:

### **Why don't you just go and get lost?**

By: Rev. Mr. Richard H. A. Washburn, Chaplain

Do you remember when you were a child and you got frustrated with someone? You wanted to lash out, in a bit of anger. You wanted to vent your frustration, but at the same time, you didn't really want to be nasty. So, you may have simply said, "*get lost!*" I remember, it was fairly common during my childhood. One kid would say to the other, "*Just get lost!*" To which another kid would say "*No, you get lost!*" Children would be on the playground, or in a neighbor's yard, telling at one another to go get lost; however, the interesting part, none of the kids really did. They all just stayed right where they were, screaming in frustration at one another, but wouldn't just walk away. They just couldn't. They couldn't let it go – go and get lost.

It's funny, I have a really good friend (believe it, or not) and we tease one another all the time. We get together to vent, over a meal or a chilled beverage, and we just go back and forth with our conversation. We talk seriously, then we're joking, then we say something sobering and back to a more jovial tone. I remember on one particular occasion, at the end of our time together, she just looked at me and said "*you can go away now – just get lost.*" It must have been the look on my face; she immediately said to me "*you know I am joking, right?*" To which I responded, "*yes, of course I know that.*" It did make me think though, it reminded me of being a child on the school playground and yelling at my fellow schoolmates.

I thought, perhaps I ought to research into this curious saying; so I did, I looked the phrase up in the dictionary. It said: [**get lost (1)** a: go away b: leave me alone (2) phrase, when you want someone, to tell someone, to go away *i.e.:* Get lost, I am tired of hearing from you. **synonym:** beat it, buzz off, get off my back, leave, bugger off, take a hike, shut up, no way, kick rocks] I read that and I must admit, I was more than mildly amused. Telling someone to "*kick rocks*"; or better yet, "*bugger off?*" That just seems silly to me. Whether it be journalistic integrity or simple complete honesty, there were other synonyms and definitions I did not give you, they were a bit on the racy side.

I kept thinking back to those childhood days, standing in the yard, being all frustrated over something I can't control. Screaming, yelling, or whatever, "*get lost!*" Well, believe it or not, as an adult; I get just as frustrated as when I was a child. Being put in a situation where I feel as though there is no one, myself included, who can control what is going to happen next, and I get frustrated.

Have you ever felt that way? Feeling as though there is looming a horrible fate for me, a friend, loved ones; I want to do something but realistically there is nothing I can do. I have little or no control over the situation and I just find myself getting horribly frustrated.

What do I do? You're probably reading this article thinking, "*I thought that was YOUR job, to help me deal with these issues.*" Well, I guess that's right; however, I'm not going to lie or mislead you, I don't give advice or make recommendations, unless they're the same thing I would do. Maybe if I tell you a story of what happened to me just recently, it will help. Do you remember the most recent three-day holiday weekend we just had? Sometimes when we have a long weekend like that, I'll go visit a family campsite in the Irish Alps (that's what they refer to East Durham in Greene County as). If it has been a particularly ornery week, I'll leave work in Albany on Friday afternoon and travel the New York State Thruway to Catskill, and drive to East Durham from there. I usually only stay the night and head back home on Saturday morning, but it's like a mini-vacation. I remember it was horrible week, between work stresses and other things, and I was NOT in the mood for vacation. I no sooner got on the Thruway and realized that it was bumper-to-bumper traffic, doing barely manageable speeds, well under the speed limit. My head started pounding, I was getting angry and I was on the verge of saying something quite vulgar. I thought about my childhood once again and the words came to me, "*just get lost!*"

That's exactly what I did! I got off the New York State Thruway, I headed in the general vicinity of South-by-Southwest, and headed to the middle of nowhere. Now, let's be honest, "*Mama didn't raise no fool!*" I have one of them fancy-schmancy global positioning systems, a GPS, that will give you street-by-street directions to wherever you want to go. So, I whipped out the GPS, plugged it in, called the campsite and got the address. The first question it asks me "*avoid toll roads?*" Meaning, should they avoid using super-highways and truck routes? I pushed the yes button and for the next fifty minutes, I was in ecstasy.

I had no idea where I was. I traveled the hills and byways of rural Greene County. I smelled the fresh cut grass and saw farm animals milling about. The roads were not congested in the least, unless you count the farm tractors and bicyclists. I turned the radio off and was able to freely and comfortably see God. Yes, you read that correctly; I got lost and saw God. The abundant and rich green trees were slightly blowing in the wind, as if waving at me. The

slight fresh scents danced in my nose while the wind softly touched my face. Now don't misunderstand, I have horrible allergies and I fully anticipated filling-up like a cheap dollar store balloon after my drive; however, as if by an extra gift from God, I did not. My headache and anxiety washed away, as if by magic, and unlike what everyone may think, I actually did as I was told. Meaning my GPS would say, "left turn ahead" and if I was feeling up for it, I would; if not, it recalculated and gave me new directions.

The moral of today's story? Next time someone says to you in frustration, "get lost." Do them and yourself a favor and do it. Bring God along for the walk or ride, and just let yourself be engulfed by all that God has given you. All the blessings that you didn't realize you had and how really unimportant all those frustrating things, that you have NO control over, are. You are God's child and He will always love you; so, go get lost and perhaps you will find Him.

---

***Richard H. A. Washburn, is Chaplain of the Greenport Fire Department in Greenport and J. W. Hoysradt Hose & Chemical Co. in Hudson, New York. He is an ordained Deacon for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany currently assigned to Holy Trinity Parish of Columbia County and actively serves in Germantown, Hudson, and Linlithgo, New York; and has former experience serving in chaplaincies at hospitals, skilled nursing and adult communities, and youth detention facilities.***