

A View from the Pew

by Deacon Greg Kandra

Waiting

In front of me, Cary Grant is running away from a crop duster.

But I'm going nowhere. I'm in line at the post office. The poster of Cary, promoting a new stamp, is another reminder to me that escape is impossible. I'm in line. Surrounded. Stuck. And so I wait. Clerks come and go, windows open and close, the clock quietly ticks. I can feel my hair grow.

A few days later, I am summoned to jury duty. This time, I sit. On a hard bench, under a bright light. I read the paper, scribble the crossword, watch uniformed people with guns walk back and forth. Once again, I'm stuck. And so I wait.

And then there's the subway. Don't get me started on the subway. I've spent some of the most meaningful years of my life stranded underground, suspended among strangers, wanting desperately to be somewhere else and going, literally, nowhere.

If life is a series of destinations, stops along the way, it is also, I think, a series of unwanted interruptions—pauses in the unfolding story. We are forced to bide our time. To pace in one place. To want to be somewhere else, anywhere else. We are forced, in other words, to wait.

We know this is part of the human condition. History is full of the tales of people who waited and wondered. Noah waited forty days for the rain to stop. The Jews waited thousands of years for a Messiah. Jesus waited thirty years before He began His life's work.

Me, I waited twenty minutes to buy some stamps and mail a package.

We can wait for years for a plea to be heard, a prayer to be answered. We sometimes become impatient with God, expecting miracles in a minute. But doesn't God also wait for us? I think so. We were made in His image, after all. We have to wait. And, very often, so does *He*.

From the moment we are created, He is calling to us, beckoning. He nudges, prods, provokes, challenges, and teases us toward Him. He is persistent. He is patient. And He is willing to wait for us, as long as it takes. He doesn't seem to mind waiting; He might grow weary of it, but He never gives up and walks away. He bides His time, waiting for us to round the corner, or cross the street, and make our way to Him.

His love is so complete, and His mercy so enduring, He will never abandon us. He's just there. In this Year of Mercy we must remember His mercy. Mercy that forgives us our dawdling, as well as our trespasses. Mercy that pardons our tardiness, or the various detours in life that make us late for Him, and keep Him waiting.

So think about *that* as you're waiting to get out of the parking lot.

And remember: He's waiting, too.

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