

The Art of Accompaniment.. Tuesday September 20 “The Church will have to initiate everyone – priests, religious and laity – into this “art of accompaniment” which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other. Evangelii Gaudium.. Pope Francis..

Checking in... Were you sent to school or taken to school when you were little? Who went with you to camp? Did your parents ever ask you to go with a brother or sister to some event? Looking back how do you remember your ‘going with’ experiences?

God accompanies Us.

And the Lord went with them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light.. Exodus 13:21

So they set out from the mount of the Lord.. and the ark of the covenant went before them three days journey, to seek out a resting place for them. Numbers 10: 33

The Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of long ago. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water.

Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth—
proverbs 8

From the beginning... God has been accompanying creation...

It is impossible to separate the action of God into first .. second.. third.. because in God there is no time.. But in order for us to imagine the work of God we can create a sequence of activity. The beginning of creation unfolds in Gods heart as God imagines loving all that God will create.

The actual world that emerges involves God giving God self. Here we come to the emptying out of God.. From eternity God decides to exist only for the Son. In order for the world to be God withdraws. Creation’s very existence and its unfolding over such a great period of time is a testimony to Gods willingness to hand over creation.. to its own processes. Think of this sequence.. God imagines how God will love what God creates.. What God imagines comes into being.. What God creates is a dynamic reality. It is an unfinished symphony. It awaits the next step.. and what has been created to truly be of God it too must reflect God’s emptying out of himself .. or it really is not the work of God.

Think of Gods accompanying presence as an artistic endeavor. Think of the action of the artist.. who begins to paint or sculpt a figure and his moves are swift and sure.. and then in one moment he paints a stroke and it is clear that he has ventured away

from the familiar. The artist had to let go of the familiar to allow something..
unknown and new to emerge

If. God accompanies us as an artist not as an engineer then God is vulnerable to the
unfolding of creation.. God suffers in process..

Pope Francis describes the path of human growth as an art form. He doesn't call it
the work of accompaniment.. or the task... or even the ministry... he calls it the art
of accompaniment.. And in this artistic venture we seek to imitate Jesus..

Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the
same mind be in you that was - in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form
of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied
himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. Phil 2

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about
seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that
had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and
went with them. He said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while
you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them said; 'Are you the
only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there
in these days?' He asked them, 'What things?' Luke 24

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had
directed them. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...And remember, I am
with you always, to the end of the age.' Matthew 28

Prayers of the faithful

Let us pray for our Church as we seek a deeper understanding of how to journey
together as the pilgrim people of God we pray to the Lord.

Let us pray for all those whose lives have been torn apart by violence.. in our cities..
on the lands of the first nations.. and everywhere that angry has overwhelmed us we
pray to the Lord

Let us pray for students and teachers as they begin a new year journeying together
that they will all grow in wisdom we pray to the Lord

Let us pray for the residents of all the centers we serve that we will see their true
dignity and approach them with reverence we pray to the Lord

Let us offer our own intentions to the Father... for these blessings we pray to the
Lord