

## RUSTY'S EULOGY

GOOD MORNING. I AM BOTH PRIVILEGED AND HUMBLLED TO BE SPEAKING WITH YOU TODAY. I RECONGIZE THERE ARE ANY PEOPLE HERE TODAY IN THIS CONGREGATION BETTER EQUIPPED AND FAR MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THE MANY FACETS OF THE LIFE OF RUTIN RAY KIMSEY; OUR REMARKABLE FRIEND, ASSOCIATE, MENTOR AND FAITH ADVISOR,BUT FOR WHATEVER REASON ON JANUARY 21<sup>ST</sup> WHEN I SPOKE WITH RUSTY HE ASKED IF I WOULD OFFER A PORTION OF HIS EULOGY AND I ASSURED HIM THAT ,GOD WILLING, I WOULD CERTAINLY DO THAT.

AS I BEGAN THINKING ABOUT WHAT I WOULD SAY TODAY I WAS REMINDED OF A CONVERSATION I HAD ABOUT THREE YEARS AGO WITH MY THEN THIRTEEN YEAR OLD GRANDDAUGHTER. WE WERE AT DINNER AND IN THE COURSE OF THE DINNER CONVERSATION I USED THE WORD "EULOGY." I noticed a rather quizzical expression on my granddaughter's face and she asked, "WHAT'S A EULOGY, BABBO?" AS AN ASIDE---HER NAME FOR ME IS BABBO, WHICH IS ITALIAN FOR PAPA, AND IT PROBABLY SEEMS A BIT ODD FOR A MAN OF IRISH DECENT TO HAVE AN ITALIAN APPELATION...BUT THAT IS THE INFLUENCE OF HER GRANDMOTHER AND YOU DON'T FOOL AROUND WITH THAT KIND OF INFLUENCE.—BUT BACK TO MY STORY...I REFLECTED ON HER QUESTION FOR PERHAPS A MINUTE AND REPLIED, "IT'S KIND OF THE STORY OF A PERSON'S LIFE." TO WHICH, AND WITHOUT A MOMENTS PAUSE, SHE REPLIED, "NOONE CAN CAPTURE A PERSON'S WHOLE LIFE

IN ONE STORY!” WOW, WHAT AN INSIGHT FROM THE MOUTH AND MIND OF SUCH A YOUNG ONE. AND SHE IS SO ABSOLUTELY CORRECT.

WITH THAT IN MIND, I REALIZED THAT THE MOST I CAN HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH IS MY STORY OF MY FRIEND RUSTY KIMSEY. MY STORY AS I WROTE IT IN MY HEART AS WE PROGRESSED THROUGH THE MANY YEARS OF OUR LIVES...COLORED NO DOUBT BY MY EXPERIENCES, AS SEEN THROUGH MY LENS, WITH ALL MY FILTERS. AND SO, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THIS IS THE STORY OF MY RUSTY KIMSEY. HE IS JUST RUSTY, NOT RUSTIN, NOT REVEREND, NOT BISHOP; JUST THE RUSTY I KNOW WHILE AT THE SAME TIME RESPECTING ALL THOSE OTHER APPELATIONS HE EARNED AND SO RIGHTFULLY DESERVES, BUT FOR ANOTHER TIME AND PLACE.

IF I AM GOING TO TELL A STORY, IT WOULD SEEM THE LOGICAL PLACE TO START WOULD BE THE BEGINNING. I FIRST MET RUSTY IN SEPTEMBER OF 1953 IN THE VETS DORM (MERRICK HALL BY NAME) AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON. OUR ROOMS WERE ADJACENT AND WE SOON BECAME ACQUAINTED AND REALIZED WE WERE BOTH FROM EASTERN OREGON. NOW, THAT PROBABLY IS NO BIG DEAL TODAY, BUT BACK THEN THE U OF O WAS A VERY BUTTONED DOWN, CLASS CONSCIOUS, PORTLAND DOMINATED INSTITUTION. IT WAS KIND OF UNDERSTOOD THAT IF YOU WORE LEVI’S YOU WERE OBVIOUSLY FROM EASTERN OREGON, HENCE NOT NECESSARILY VERY COOL. I PROBABLY SHOULD MENTION THAT IN 1953 LEVIS WERE THE ONLY ITERATION OF DENIM AND DENIM WAS WORN ONLY BY MALES...QUITE A DIFFERENT LANDSCAPE.. IT WASN’T LONG INTO OUR FRIENDSHIP THAT I BECAME AWARE THAT RUSTY WAS RATHER ATYPICAL OF COLLEGE FRESHMEN IN THAT HE WAS CLEARLY A RELIGIOUS YOUNG MAN AND POSSESSED OF

DEFINITE ETHICAL AND PHILOSOPHIC PRINCIPLES. I AM NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR AS TO EXACTLY HOW IT CAME ABOUT, BUT FAIRLY EARLY ON WE BEGAN DISCUSSING RELIGION AND FAITH AND WERE JOINED IN OUR EVENING CHAT SESSIONS BY OUR DORM COUNSELLOR WHO WAS A DEVOUT LUTHERAN. SO HERE WE WERE, AN EPISCOPALIAN, A LUTHERAN AND A ROMAN CATHOLIC, OPENLY DISCUSSING RELIGIOUS, PHILOSOPHICAL AND DOCTRINAL CONCEPTS AND ALL IN A SPIRIT OF CURIOSITY, MEANING AND BELIEF SYSTEMS. I DON'T MEAN TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT WE WERE A TRIO OF SOCIAL HERMITS, BUT THOSE CONVERSATIONS WERE DEFINITELY A MEANINGFUL PART OF OUR EXPERIENCE.

RUSTY WENT THROUGH THE SEEMINGLY OBLIGATORY GREEK RUSH WEEK AND PLEDGED THE SIGMA NU FRATERNITY. I DIDN'T GO THROUGH RUSH BECAUSE I KNEW I DIDN'T HAVE THE MONEY TO PAY FOR A FRATERNITY INITIATION, DUES AND MISCELLANEOUS OTHER EXPENSES. RUSTY KEPT PITCHING THE IDEA THAT I SHOULD RECONSIDER BECAUSE HE WAS HAVING A GREAT TIME AS A FRATERNITY PLEDGE AND HE WAS CERTAIN I WOULD FIT RIGHT IN. MIDWAY THROUGH WINTER QUARTER I GOT A JOB AS A HASHER AT THE Kappa Alpha Theta sorority SO RUSTY INFORMED ME THAT I NO LONGER HAD ANY EXCUSE FOR NOT JOINING A FRAT AND HE MANIPULATED THE SYSTEM TO INFORMALLY RUSH ME AND GET ME TO "POCKET PLEDGE" THE HOUSE SO I COULD MOVE INTO THE HOUSE AT THE START OF OUR SOPHOMORE YEAR. THIS WAS ONE OF THE FIRST INSTANCES OF HIS LEADERSHIP STYLE THAT I CAME TO KNOW AND RESPECT. HE WOULD QUIETLY, BUT STEADFASTLY, DESIGN HIS PLAN AND THEN UNOBTRUSIVELY IMPLEMENT HIS STRATEGY.

IT WAS DURING THIS FRESMAN YEAR THAT I LEARNED RUSTY ALSO HAD A MUSICAL TALENT. I CAME UPON THIS BIT OF KNOWLEDGE QUITE SERENDIPITOUSLY IN THAT I HAPPENED TO BE WALKING BACK TO THE DORM ONE AFTERNOON AND SAW RUSTY WALKING UP THE HILL BEHIND THE DORM TO THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT. I COULDN'T IMAGINE WHY HE WOULD BE GOING THERE SO I JUST FOLLOWED HIM UP THE HILL. I SAW HIM ENTER A BUILDING THAT HOUSED SEVERAL PRACTICE ROOMS FOR STUDENTS TO WORK ON THEIR MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS. I ENTERED THE BUILDING, WALKED DOWN THE HALL AND THERE BEHIND THE GLASS FRONT FOUR OF ONE OF THE ROOMS WAS RUSTY PRODUCING INCREDIBLE MUSIC FROM HIS MARIMBA. I WAS AMAZED. HIS HANDS WERE FLYING UP AND DOWN THE SURFACE OF THE MARIMBA WITH MULTIPLE "HAMMERS" IN EACH HAND AND PRODUCING REALLY BEAUTIFUL AND WHAT I PERCEIVED TO BE DIFFICULT ARRANGEMENTS OF MUSIC. I STOOD THERE IN TOTAL AMAZEMENT. AND THEN HE LOOKED UP, SAW ME AND STOPPED IN MID NOTE. HE SEEMED TOTALLY FLUMMOXED. HE OPENED THE DOOR AND ASKED WHAT I WAS DOING IN THE MUSIC SCHOOL BUILDING. I ANSWERED I WAS LISTENING TO SOME BEAUTIFUL MUSIC. I ASKED HIM WHY HE NEVER MENTIONED THIS WONDERFUL TALENT AND HE RESPONDED IN WHAT I BELIEVE WAS HIS ACUTAL HONEST APPRAISAL OF HIS TALENT, AND THAT WAS THAT HE DIDN'T BELIEVE HE REALLY HAD ANY TALENT. HE WASN'T BEING DISINGENUOUS, HE WAS HUMBLE ALMOST TO THE POINT OF BEING SELF EFFACING. HE WAS NEVER ARROGANT NOR PRIDEFUL. HOWEVER, IF THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT WHICH HE FELT CONFIDENT AND HE RECEIVED A COMPLIMENT FOR IT HE HAD THE ABILITY TO ACCEPT THE

COMPLIMENT WITH A SIMPLE, STRAIGHTFORWARD “THANK YOU,” AND THEN JUST MOVE ON.

LEADERSHIP CAN TAKE ON MANY FACES, BUT RUSTY’S STYLE WAS THE EPITOME OF ALL THAT IS POSITIVE ABOUT TRUE LEADERSHIP. HE WAS A QUIETLY CONVINCING, CLEAR HEADED, NON-COMBATIVE, COLLABORATIVE MAN WHO BROUGHT PEOPLE TOGETHER TOWARD A COMMON GOAL AND FACILITATED THEIR MUTUAL BENEFIT AND WITH A RESPECTFUL DEMEANER THAT CREATED CONSENSUS WHEN MOST OTHER STYLES WOULD HAVE RESULTED IN CHAOS AND DISUNITY. I FIRST SAW THIS WHEN HE WAS PRESIDENT OF THE SIGMA NU HOUSE AND YOU CAN’T IMAGINE A MORE DIVERSE GROUP OF YOUNG MEN, EACH WITH A VERY SEPARATE VIEW OF WHAT AND HOW HE WANTED THINGS RUN. THERE WAS ALSO A RATHER WIDE DISPERSION OF AGES, ..IN THAT WE HAD SOME MEN WHO WERE MILITARY VETERANS AND SAW LIFE QUITE DIFFERENTLY FROM THE 19 YEAR OLD HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE. RUSTY MANAGED TO BRING ALL THESE FACTIONS TOGETHER AND DRAMATICALLY IMPROVED THE SCHOLASTIC STANDING AMONG FRATERNITIES ON CAMPUS, NOT TO MENTION THE VITALITY OF THE HOUSE IN ALL DIMENSIONS OF THE SOCIAL LIFE OF THE U OF O.

RUSTY AND I TOOK A FEW COURSES TOGETHER, NAMELY GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD, CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PSYCHOLOGY OF ADJUSTMENT...I AM NOT TOTALLY SURE WHAT WE EXPECTED TO GET FROM THAT COMBINATION, BUT IT WAS AN INTERESTING LEARNING EXPERIENCE. WE STUDIED TOGETHER AND CRAMMED FOR EXAMS TOGETHER. WE BOTH ACTUALLY GOT EXCELLENT GRADES IN TWO OF

THE THREE CLASSES AND I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOUR IMAGINATION TO GUESS WHICH ONE WAS THE CHALLENGE.

AFTER COLLEGE WE EACH WENT OUR SEPARATE WAYS AND FOR MANY YEARS HAD ONLY INFREQUENT CONTACT, BUT ALWAYS WHEN WE DID WE HAD THE ABILITY TO SEIZE THE MOMENT AND TAKE UP WHERE WE HAD LEFT OFF AND ENJOY GETTING CAUGHT UP WITH EACH OTHER'S LIVES AND THEN OFF AGAIN INTO OUR INDIVIDUAL CAREERS. I WAS ALWAYS SOMEWHAT ENVIIOUS, RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING OF OUR FRIENDSHIP THAT RUSTY KNEW EXACTLY WHO AND WHAT HE WANTED TO BE AND TO DO WITH HIS LIFE; WHEREAS I HADN'T A CLUE. I FOUND HIS CERTAINTY OF PURPOSE ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO COMPREHEND. THERE IS NO QUESTION IN MY MIND THAT RUSTY HAD THE CALLING TO SERVE JESUS IN ALL THAT HE DID AND SAID.

IT WAS PROBABLY THIS AWARENESS OF HIS COMMITMENT TO OUR GOD THAT CAUSED ME TO CONTACT RUSTY IN EARLY 2003 AND IN A TELEPHONE CONVERSATION RAISE A COUPLE REALLY PERPLEXING ISSUES THAT WERE CAUSING ME SOME SPIRITUAL DISTRESS. I EXPLAINED TO RUSTY THE NATURE OF MY CONCERNS AND HE SUGGESTED THAT I GET A COPY OF A BOOK TITLED "LISTENING FOR THE HEARTBEAT OF GOD—A CELTIC SPIRITUALITY" HE SUGGESTED I READ THE BOOK AND THAT WE COULD DISCUSS IT THE FOLLOWING TUESDAY MORNING. HE SUGGEST AN EIGHT A.M. TIME FOR OUR CALL. THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF OUR TUESDAY CALLS...SORT OF A RUSTY AND DAVID VERSION OF TUESDAYS WITH MOREY. WE HAD A STIMULATING

CONVERSATION ON THAT NEXT TUESDAY AND HE THEN RECOMMENDED THAT I PURCHASE A BOOK AUTHORED BY MARCUS BORG TITLED "MEETING JESUS AGAIN FOR THE FIRST TIME." I WAS TOTALLY ABSORBED BY THE BOOK AND ACTUALLY READ IT FROM COVER TO COVER TWICE AND SECTIONS OF IT MULTIPLE TIMES. WE HAD NUMEROUS TALKS ON SUBJECT MATTER IN THE BOOK AND THIS LAUNCHED US ON OUR AMAZING JOURNEY OF TUESDAY PHONE CALLS. WHEN I SAW RUSTY IN JANUARY WE ESTIMATED WE HAD LOGGED SOMEWHERE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF 600+ CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN 2003 AND 2014.

DURING THESE CONVERSATIONS WE EXPLORED VIRTUALLY ANY AND ALL ASPECTS OF OUR RELIGIONS AND OUR FAITH. THERE WERE NO RESTRICTIONS ON WHAT WAS ACCEPTABLE AS A TOPIC; JUST THAT WE TREAT ALL THINGS WITH RESPECT AND AN OPEN HEART AND MIND. I LOOK ON THESE CONVERSATIONS AS THE SINGLE GREATEST INFLUENCE IN MY ENTIRE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

AS AN OUTGROWTH OF THESE CONVERSATIONS WE CAME TO KNOW EACH OTHER'S HEART AND SOUL WITH AN OPENNESS AND FREEDOM WITH NO GUILF OR HIDDEN AGENDA. I CAME TO KNOW RUSTY AS THE CONSUMMATE GENTLE SOUL WHO LOVES HUMANITY, CARES PASSIONATELY ABOUT THE DISADVANTAGED PERSONS OF OUR WORLD AND HE WAS TIRELESS IN HIS EFFORTS TO EASE THE BURDEN OF ANY AFFLICTED PERSON. RUSTY IS THE PERSONIFICATION OF THE NEW COVENANT BROUGHT BY JESUS; HE LOVED GOD WITH HIS WHOLE HEART, HIS WHOLE SOUL AND HIS ENTIRE BEING AND HE LOVED EVERYONE AS HE LOVED HIMSELF.....I STRIVE ON A DAILY BASIS TO ACT ON THE MANY LESSONS HE TAUGHT ME AND TO BECOME

MORE LIKE HE TAUGHT US TO BE....WITHOUT JUDGMENT AND LOVING ALL; HOWEVER CHALLENGING THAT CAN BE. WE ARE BLESSED TO HAVE HAD THE GIFT OF RUSTY IN OUR LIVES.