



OUR LADY OF  
**LOURDES**  
CATHOLIC PARISH

# THE LOURDES WORD

WINTER 2024



~Winter Theme~  
*Good Samaritans*

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The Lourdes Word  
Winter 2024  
[www.ollindy.org](http://www.ollindy.org)

## The Coat

by Pat Brown

For several years, my husband Larry and I served alongside my sister and brother-in-law at the Cathedral Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry in downtown Indianapolis. Over the years, we met many other volunteers from parishes and organizations around the city, many of whom were Good Samaritans in various other ways as well. We grew to love many of our fellow volunteers, but because we worked on the front line, we were often drawn into the lives of the guests. Some were cantankerous. Some were gracious and funny. Many were mentally or physically ill. Some were homeless. All were unique in their personalities and their circumstances.

Larry was an avid fisherman who was known to put on legendary fish fries. He and his friend, John, served as Good Samaritans once a year when they fried enough fish they had caught to feed 300 or more people at John's Little Blue River Friends Church. Ladies in the congregation provided side dishes to complete the meal. Donations collected were used for various causes over the years, including funding adoptions of children from other countries, support of a family

in danger of losing their home because of illness, and water purification systems.

Larry fished all year long, sometimes in cold, damp conditions, and was always on the lookout for outerwear to keep him warm and dry. He once saw someone wearing a nearly floor length coat that would serve the purpose, but couldn't discover where he could purchase one. After searching for a long time, a guest appeared at Larry's station one chilly morning wearing a coat that was perfect for his needs. It had obviously seen many seasons of wear, but it was the coat of Larry's dreams. He asked the unfamiliar guest where he had gotten the coat in hopes of finding a source. As he was explaining his need for such a garment, the guest removed the coat and handed it to Larry. Through all Larry's protests, the man, whose name and circumstances were unknown to us, refused to take it back. He told Larry that he was being helped and that he wanted in turn to help someone else. Larry was overcome with emotion as this man, who seemingly had nothing, willingly gave what little he had to a stranger.

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# The Coat

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Larry wore that coat often. He offered prayers for the man whom we never saw again, and wondered if he was an angel sent to minister to his needs. Everyone who heard the story was touched by this man's act of generosity. A few years later, Larry passed away from kidney and heart disease. As I sorted through his things, giving away what could be used by another, the coat was one of the first things that had to be shared. I returned it to the soup kitchen, where a small amount of clothing was kept for guests. I don't know what happened to the coat. I don't know if it is still being worn by anyone today. I don't know what happened to Larry's angel. But I know what happened to our hearts and souls because of a Good Samaritan's gift.



# Lesson of the Good Samaritan

by Andrea Fleak

Jesus loved to use parables to give a lesson. The story of the Good Samaritan is an example of one of these parables. There is this man who is lying on the ground after being robbed, stripped, and beaten. A Priest and a Levite passed him without stopping to help, but an unexpected person stopped to help. From a historical-critical lens, “the helper” was a Samaritan, and that group was looked down upon in the region. The Priest and Levite were religious leaders who had responsibilities in the temple; they were who we would have expected to help. It seemed like Jesus was saying something more profound about how we look at people.

How have you experienced the Good Samaritan story in your own life? Have you received help from an unexpected place? I had an experience like this a few weeks ago. I was preparing to go into a meeting about which I was pretty nervous. While waiting for the people to get to my office, I told one of my Senior student employees that I was nervous about this meeting. He began to think out loud, and I was not sure where this conversation was going to go, but then something unexpected happened: “How do I respond to this?” he said quietly to himself; then, looking at me more confidently, he asked, “do you want to pray together?” And so right there, in the middle of the workspace of my office, the housekeeper vacuuming in the background, he said a prayer for me and the meeting. I don’t remember many of the words in the prayer, but I walked away feeling moved by this gesture.

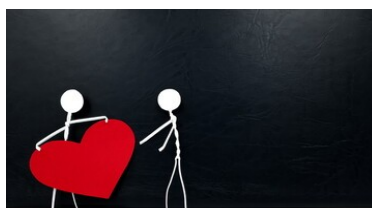
Walking into my meeting, I was about to have another unexpected encounter. One of my other Senior student employees was sitting in on the meeting. As we were

beginning, I opened my folder, and a sticker that was not there earlier in the day fell out that read, “Don’t overthink it.” I smiled, moved it to the side, and continued with the meeting. After the meeting, my student employee hung back until the two of us were in my office. With a smile, he said, “You know that sticker, that was me.” It was his way of using humor to lighten the situation and make me smile.

In the following days, I reflected on these two encounters. I wondered if these two students realized how deeply their actions had moved me. Do any of us really stop and think about that? When we talk to a friend in need or make gestures of kindness in the grocery store or at church, do we realize the impact we are having?

A few days after my meeting, I had a third encounter. One of my Freshman student employees brought me a Christmas card with a letter. The first line read in part, “Thank you for taking a chance on me.” In the conversation, she told me how she felt seen for who she is. Without knowing it, by meeting her in the moment everyday, I had been the Good Samaritan to her.

Jesus’s parables are often deep with meaning and symbolism. Maybe simplifying, we are all human, and being the Good Samaritan is about seeing the other person as human and then responding to the need like my Freshman said, “taking a chance on me.” For me, my Seniors saw me, and they took a chance in responding, one with prayer and the other with humor. Neither took much time or were overly big gestures, yet their actions profoundly touched me. So, how have you experienced the Good Samaritan in your life?



# A Samaritan for Grandma

by Linda Abner

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I was babysitting my 1-year-old granddaughter for a few days in Brooklyn, New York, for the first time, while her parents took a well-deserved break. Thrilled to have this special time with her and eager to explore her intriguing neighborhood (bodegas, curiosity shops, and playgrounds around every corner), we set out after her nap on the first day. Harper was the perfect companion, helpfully pointing out familiar sights as we wandered about: “kitty?”, “light?”, “swing?” The words floated out from beneath her stroller canopy like sprites in her tiny baby voice. After a long walk and some playtime in “her” park, I decided to buy a pizza from the place her dad had recommended and head back home for dinner.

It so happened that her apartment was at the top of a hill. It was a warm day, and I was huffing and puffing in no time as I progressed to the top, hanging on to the ungainly pizza box with one hand while pushing stroller, baby, and necessary *accouterments* with the other. Finally, the apartment building in sight, I breathed a sigh of relief as I entered the lobby, parked the stroller and proceeded with baby, pizza, and bag up the stairs to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor apartment. Depositing all on the floor by my feet, I pulled out the key and turned the lock.

It didn't unlock. What?

That's odd, I thought. Again I tried, without success. I checked the key – was this the right one? I tried every key on the ring; none worked. Was this the right apartment? Was some stranger going to fling open the door momentarily to accuse me of trying to break in? Alarmed, I searched the pictures on the hall walls and wreath on the door of the

apartment opposite, trying to envision if they were the same ones I'd seen upon leaving earlier. Maybe it was the wrong floor? But no, the apartment number was clearly the correct one. Meanwhile, the baby had pulled out all the contents of her bag and now had crawled on top of the pizza box. Hot, sweating, and beginning to panic, I considered what to do if I couldn't get back in – horrified at the thought I might actually have to call my kids back from their break – on the first day! – because I couldn't unlock the door.

I knocked on the opposite apartment – no answer. Picking up (fussy) baby, (smashed) pizza box, and (hastily refilled) bag, I went down to an apartment on the first floor, where I'd earlier passed what I prayed would be a nice lady who might be able to help me. I can only imagine her thoughts when she opened her door to find a wild-eyed, sweat-soaked, clearly unsettled stranger with a curious baby, mangled pizza, and disheveled bag hanging off her. “I'm so sorry to bother you,” I began, and explained my plight, ending with the obvious “I'm not from here.” I asked if she knew the landlord's number, hoping I might call him and use his master key. Inviting me in, she offered me water and a chair to rest in, while she looked for information. I could see she had a young child herself, playing in his playpen, and thanked God for her trust and kindness.

Unsuccessful in finding the landlord's information, we deduced there was nothing to do but call the police for help. As I sat there with baby on lap, dejected by my incompetence, I suddenly heard my helper's voice giving the address of the building over the phone. Wait a minute...did she say 314? *Three14?*

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# A Samaritan for Grandma

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And I realized I had entered the wrong building. Oh!

After catching my helper's eye and sheepishly motioning her to hang up, I confessed my mistake with much embarrassment, gathered up baby, bag, and pizza ruins – all the while apologizing and thanking her profusely. Then I humbly made my way to the correct, identical building – right next door.



I was so relieved to be back in that apartment! So thankful I didn't have to call parents back home, or police to break in.

But most of all, I am forever grateful to the Good Samaritan. My helper showed sympathy and graciousness – and good humor – to a lost and clueless grandma in a strange and foreign land.



*If you enjoy writing and would like to submit an article, poem, etc., then please see the last page of this publication.*



# Good Samaritans Along the Road of Life

by Sally Ann Welch

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My mother, Rose, was the fifth of my grandparents' seven daughters. She was a loving and giving person. She came of age during the Great Depression, and she knew what it was like to "do without."

My eldest aunt, Ruth, and my mom each had only one child. However, the other five sisters made up for them. Two aunts had 12 children. Two others had six children. And one aunt had four children. So, we were a pretty large, extended family.

There were times when the sisters – especially those with larger families – found themselves in need. I can remember taking them groceries and going by the coal yard to buy coal to help keep them warm.

I'm not sure that helping your own family really qualifies as being a Good Samaritan, but I choose to see my mother in that light. And you might think that with this excellent early training that perhaps the Samaritan tradition might have passed on to me – but, not so much.

After I grew up and got married, the member of my own adult family who would qualify as a Good Samaritan was not me. Rather, it was my husband, Charlie.

Early on, I probably should have realized that he possessed this quality. One day we'd had a disagreement, as young couples occasionally do. He decided he needed to take a walk in the country. When he came home, he brought with him a tiny, sickly-looking kitten.

As he'd walked along the road, the kitten emerged from a field and started to follow him. He stopped to tell it to go home, but it climbed up his leg and came to rest on his shoulder. Charlie brought him home, we took him to the vet, and named him Country Joe. He was our first pet, and we had him for many years. That was my first indication that Charlie might be a Good Samaritan. I found out for certain many years later.

It was dusk, and we were driving home from town (Martinsville, IN) on State Road 44, where we lived. It is a hilly, winding road, with no berm in many places. As we rounded a curve, we saw a young man stumbling along the side of the road. He said, "What's that guy doing?" I said, "I don't know. I think he's drunk." Charlie said, "I think he's in trouble. I'm stopping." I was skeptical when he invited the teenager into the car. But he got in, and we took him home with us. His name was Greg, and as we talked with him, we discovered that he was from a group home in Martinsville. So he had already wandered over five miles from home.

Something had happened to upset him, and he wanted to see his girlfriend, who had recently moved to Franklin. He did not know how far it was from Martinsville to Franklin. All he knew was that whenever they drove down State Road 37 (now I-69), there was a sign pointing east that read, "Franklin." When he'd left town, he thought maybe he could get to Franklin before dark.

At home, we offered him some food and something to drink, trying to make him comfortable enough to give us some useful information. Finally, he told us the name of the group home, and I got the phone number. I called the manager there, and she gave us directions.

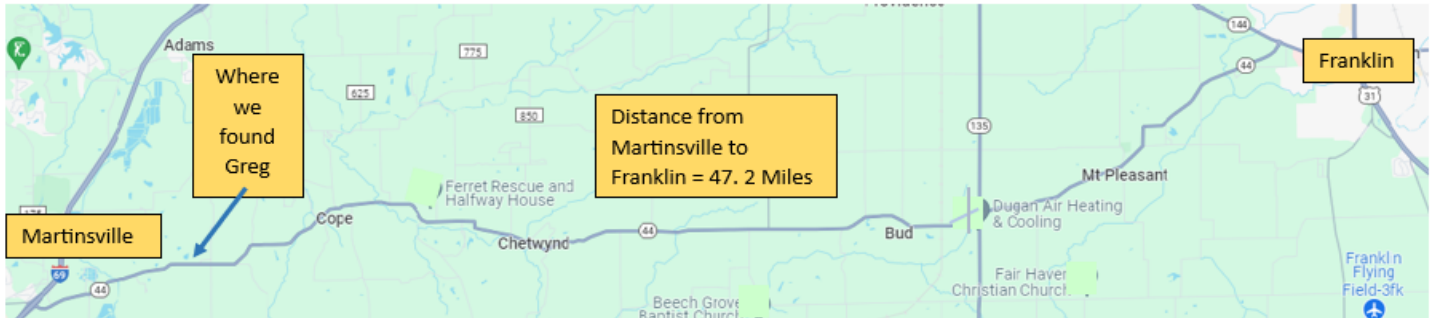
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# Good Samaritans Along the Road of Life

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When we got Greg back to the group home, the woman said, “I am so glad you stopped and helped him. It’s hard telling what would have happened to Greg if someone else had picked him up.”

So, Good Samaritan? I nominate Charlie Welch.



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## Thanksgiving for Good Samaritans

*by Jean Walker*

In my family, it had become a tradition to celebrate Thanksgiving and Christmas on Thanksgiving weekend, in Tiffin, Ohio. So, my daughters and I were on our way back from Tiffin to Indianapolis on the Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend 1992; Rachel was 16 years old at the time, Suzanne was 15, and Jennifer was 11. We had made this trip many times and were quite familiar with the lay of the land. Rachel was driving, and she was doing a fine job. Suzanne and Jennifer were in the back seat. We were listening to Christmas music, having a nice peaceful drive home. However, as it happens sometimes, the weather had turned a bit bad, and the highway was a little slick in places, like on bridges and overpasses. Rachel was being careful, and I was also watching very carefully to make sure any problems were identified. There was a car hauling an empty trailer near us, and as the bridge we were crossing (around Cambridge City on I-70) had become icy, the trailer fish-tailed out of control. Rachel had no where else to go, and so we hit it. And in that moment, there was a chain reaction, with several cars involved in our wreck, and the highway was shut down.

I don't remember how many cars were involved, but the State Police arrived to the accident scene pretty quickly. After a lot of sorting out crash particulars, and my car getting towed away, it became obvious that my family would need a ride home.

While we had been waiting around for things to resolve, I had been talking to some of the other people involved and those who were waiting for the crash site to be cleared. One of the people I talked to was a Mr. Amlin (I think the spelling is correct) who was traveling with his family back to the Indianapolis area. He was not involved in the wreck but couldn't go anywhere until it was cleared. He noticed we were in a bit of a stressful situation. As we talked about it, he explained that he was a minister from the east side of Indianapolis and offered to drive us home. He had a large van and said we could all squeeze in. If I remember right, he and his wife had three children as well – one of them, Vince, was Jennifer's age. I was reluctant to go with a stranger, but he asked about our parish, and when I mentioned OLL, he said he knew

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# Thanksgiving for Good Samaritans

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and had worked with Fr. Buck. Well, that cleared any concerns for me, and so when we were able to get on the road again, we piled into their van and off we went. He took us all the way to our house and showed himself and his family as truly Good Samaritans!

We tried to thank our Good Samaritans, but of course they were perfectly glad they were able to help. We did bring him a basket of fruit which wasn't nearly enough to thank them for their kindness. For many years after, as we crossed that bridge, we remembered their kindness and said prayers of Thanksgiving for Good Samaritans like them.

## Load Lightener

by Kate Cabell

The Covid pandemic allowed me to live a very comfortable life. Being an introvert, I was suddenly being told to stay home, and for me, it was heavenly – no more invitations, no more obligations, no more having to go here, there, or anywhere! That idyllic life lasted for months. But now life has returned to normal, and I am finding it a bit difficult to force myself to go out into the world. Some days it takes everything I've got to force myself to run what used to be simple errands.

A trip to go shopping lies before me like the twelve labors of Hercules. Groceries, hardware store, and post office line the list, and God forbid if I have to stop for gas! I force myself up in the morning, get as ready as I'll ever be, and get on my way.

I drag myself out of my car and trudge into the store only to be greeted by a cheerful soul welcoming me with a huge smile! Well, that's very nice, and I meet that person, eye to eye, and express thanks with a big smile of my own. Already I feel my spirit lifting.

Since the pandemic, most places are short-staffed, and I hesitate to ask for help, knowing that I might annoy an employee and possibly put added stress. Sometimes I am treated as if I am, indeed, an annoyance, and I receive no help; but sometimes the employee goes above and beyond to give me aid, and I am touched by this. And now, my trudging steps are now lighter.

Feeling “the love” now, I try to engage a fellow customer with a smile or a word or two, knowing that my attempt may be ignored. It often is ignored, but then an aisle or two over there is a connection, and my heart leaps with actual joy! A fellow human reacts in kind, and the world is suddenly a kinder, gentler place. The world, outside my door, suddenly lifts me up, and I can't keep from smiling.

For me, these are all acts of Good Samaritans. It doesn't have to be saving a life or something quite so major. Someone acting with compassion to lighten someone's load is the definition of a Good Samaritan.

Another task I struggle with is having to call customer service. I dread it like the plague. Minutes mount while waiting for that maddening music to end and for a human to actually answer, and I would wager that four out of five calls end with no satisfaction. But, oh that fifth call, when an angel appears on the line and aid is rendered, cheerfully – that is the best feeling in the world.

My daughter has such a job, and the stories she has shared make me so proud of her. It just occurred to me that she has never shared a story about dealing with a difficult client – that alone says a lot about her! After helping an elderly man understand some of the new

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# Load Lightener

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benefits he had questions about, she was told by him that he would meet her in heaven for being kind to an old man. Another woman she helped asked her if she could say a prayer for her. During the prayer, she thanked God for all of the angels in the world who are kind, thoughtful, and patient with the elderly. It made my daughter cry.

I wish everyone who has the difficult job of customer service knew just how important their work is. In that job capacity, they are a gift to people in need of a Good Samaritan – a compassionate person to lighten their load.

Lucky for me, there are many kind and gentle souls in the world who, for me, are Good Samaritans. I just have to think positively when I do have to enter the world and keep my eye out for these angels on earth because they always lighten my load.

## Jews vs Samaritans: Redux

by Gabrielle Shufeldt

I start with an appreciation for *The Lourdes Word* and for the Parish which supports it. As a spiritual endeavor arising from the pews (a rarity in my experience), it deserves recognition and encouragement.

My sources for this reflection were the Gospels, the Jerome Commentary, and a variety of YouTube videos. The parables of the Good Samaritan and presumably Not-so-good Woman at the Well have, under their surface stories, complicated layers of religious precepts and practices, social norms, and psychological constraints. I made note of four ideas. The Jews who ignored the wounded man were acting as their religion taught. They were righteous. The Samaritans in both stories were in the subservient or outcast group and incurred some fear and risk for their actions. Many of the religious differences between Jews and Samaritans were result of the Babylonian taking Jews into captivity and leaving the Samaritans to develop what remained (e.g., holy books, worship sites, and intermarriage with gentiles) despite a common genetic background. Finally, when the Jews were permitted to return from exile, Samaritans wanted to help rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, but were rebuffed—back to religious purity and righteousness.

That was then. This is now. Same old, same old—just substitute different groups. In the United States, the distinction between White and Black has been the longest and most destructive, and it has been the brutal history of the minority seeking to be accepted on an equal basis. Yet today, to make rosters, as it were, of all the demographic separations in the country would be to give the various sports conferences a run. I read the Gospel stories as highlighting the importance of the religious beliefs and practices in acknowledging (or not) the humanity of the stranger. I read today's media as highlighting the importance of voting in defining whether (or not) we see the humanity of the stranger. The Samaritan had personal resources for the extraordinary and ordinary needs they met. We have a complex international to local system to address needs and provide services. Voting is the most direct way we are involved in the many aspects of the system.

Since I intended this to be a spiritual reflection, I had to think about ways in which I fulfilled the roles of the Jew or Samaritan. I am quite aware of my many privileges in family, education, professional service, and

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## Jews vs Samaritans: Redux

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life experience. I spent a career defining needs and working to find solutions for the various demographic separations which so characterize our country. Most of the time, I would be in the dominant group. My mantra might be “Love God..., love neighbor as self..., treat stranger as neighbor,” but I had to think about whom I would see as a stranger and avoid. Then someone new came to rent the house next door.

The neighbor had the story of the pregnant daughter forced to give up the baby days before I even saw furniture coming, and the political banner went up before I even saw the person. Our candidate choices were a better stand-in for how we saw needs for food, clothing, shelter, safety, et al. being met than our religious practice at the parish down the street. The block was soon filled with flags, signs, banners which served to further identify the newcomer as “other.” I had my own replay moment. Some years prior, the then bishop and priests of the parish had used the newspaper to publicize their intent to deny communion to the senator who supported so many of the causes I supported. I went on “sabbatical” for several years and had to work my way back into the Church.



I put some garden flowers or vegetables on her porch one day. We started talking when she came out to smoke. I brought out some snacks. She had a bottle of Menage a Trois Red Blend, her favorite, she said. We had many bottles that year, and though our votes cancelled out who we were and what we believed, we cried when I moved. “Menage a Trois?” I could picture Picasso’s dove as our third.

### PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

*There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test him and said: “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus said to him, “What is written in the law? How do you read it?” He said in reply, “You must love your Lord, your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength and all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” He replied to him, “You have answered correctly, do this and you will live.”*

*But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied, “A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down that road but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wound and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, ‘Take care of him. And if you spend more than I have given you, I shall pay you on my way back.’ Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers’ victim?” He answered, “The one who treated him with mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”*



# Good Label

by Michele Oertel

To quote William Shakespeare, "What's in a name? That which we call a rose, by any other word would smell as sweet." This adage supports my growing lament for labels – specifically labeling of people. Now don't get me wrong, I am all about labeling items so they can be identified, labeling maladies so they can be addressed, etc. However, thinking of a person as a one-dimensional being warranting a label does not sit well with me. And yet, to label someone a "Good Samaritan" is a different story. That good person in that good Bible story is one worthy of a good label.

In this increasingly secular society, the fact that references to the "Good Samaritan" with Christian roots are still in the common vernacular is heartening to me. Admittedly, I was not aware that there is actually a National Good Samaritan Day (March 13 for others possibly unaware) – what?! While I realize it could be on par with National Donut Day, the fact is that a public office has sanctioned a non-secular term. The public sector whose mission is public service has given a nod to service with Christian undertones. That gives me hope!

While we are well into the new year, I find myself thinking of the classic Christmas movie "Miracle on 34th Street" where ultimately the public court determines the authenticity of Kris Kringle as Santa Claus, Good Samaritan in his own right. This is a story of faith versus reason. Albeit a movie, the annual message refreshes my faith in humanity against the daily backdrop of local and national news.

Even though we are *in* this world, we are not supposed to be *of* this world. As Christians, we know that we are called to love and serve God and to love and serve our neighbor, even if that does not seem reasonable. We all have the capacity to be Good Samaritans – in ways large or small, public or private, known or unknown to ourselves. Hopefully we can all strive to keep our faith in humanity and to recognize the face of the Good Samaritan in our neighbor and ourselves. I can recount and appreciate several Good Samaritans in my life! In Luke 10, Jesus teaches about charity and redirects with the question, "who might be a neighbor to me?" Well, I believe you are my neighbor, and I welcome the opportunity to earn the Good Samaritan label.



# Good Samaritans to the Rescue

by Mark Hudson

Last year, I made the decision to walk the Camino de Santiago. Some may have heard about this pilgrim journey from watching the movie “The Way” starring Martin Sheen. This legendary pilgrimage attracts thousands of individuals yearly on several routes in Europe with the goal of visiting the cathedral in Santiago Spain in which it is believed the bones of St. James are laid to rest. Most walk the route (but for a few who ride a bicycle like our OLL Director of Religious Education, Matthew Fallon). To prepare, I joined “Hoosiers on the Camino,” an Indianapolis group of individuals who have walked one of the routes or who are considering undertaking such a pilgrimage.

Through my preparation and my Camino walk, we encountered many “Good Samaritans” but really don’t recognize them, as it often happens in our daily lives. Below are three examples of Good Samaritans coming to offer me assistance, none that I knew before hand and two who were only in my presence for a short time and whom I will never see again.

Having never tried anything like this, it became apparent that I needed some intense preparation. The Hoosiers on the Camino group was very helpful, through the organized hikes and helpful advice concerning packing -- like what types of shoes and socks to wear and how not to overpack as you carried what you brought. Good Samaritan(s) #1.

As part of my preparation (and regular exercise), I frequently walk on the Pennsy Trail to the East and back home, and I occasionally walk on Washington Street West toward downtown and back home. My children told me that I was foolish to walk downtown on Washington Street as it was too dangerous. I told them that I was okay and that if I just “minded my own business” then nothing would happen in broad daylight. Having done this several times, I recall one instance last year on August 31 when I walked to the Shepherd Community Center for an informational meeting concerning the proposed Blue Line rapid transit along Washington Street. After the meeting, around 5:30pm, I started back home. Shortly thereafter, a young lady, who appeared to be homeless, walked op-

posite my direction. Not making eye contact, I continued. In fewer than 100 yards, she ran up to me holding a piece of steel or concrete and hit me in the jaw. My glasses flew onto Washington Street, I was bleeding, dazed, and had a tooth knocked out. Suddenly, a young black man was at my side helping me. He guided me to a spot where I could lie down, gave me a cloth for my face, and stayed with me until the EMS arrived. Just as suddenly as he arrived, this helpful man was gone before I could properly thank him. Good Samaritan # 2.

Last October, I was in Portugal and began hiking the Camino. After some research, I had decided to walk the Portuguese coastal route starting in Porto Portugal and continuing into Spain to the Cathedral in Santiago. This is approximately 200 miles mostly parallel to the Atlantic Ocean. This choice was twofold. Firstly, I had never been to either country, and secondly, it seemed like a beautiful walk. If I gave myself 12 days of walking, then I thought this would be attainable even for someone of my age. This route was more beautiful than I had even imagined. For two full days, I walked the coast just a few yards from the ocean.

Along the way, I met people from around the world. Pilgrims from Croatia, Germany, Poland, Taiwan, Germany, Spain, Latvia, Canada, Scotland, the Netherlands, and the United States walked with me at various times. The most memorable experience was on a day when I was walking with five others on a rocky trail away from the ocean. At one point, I lost my balance and fell. The others rushed to my assistance and helped me up. Then about a half mile later, I again fell. Due to the weight of my backpack, I again was unable to stand up. Justina, a beautiful young lady around the age of 25 from Poland, helped me. She was walking with two poles and stated that it would be easier for me if I had brought walking sticks. Being somewhat embarrassed at this point, I told the group to walk on without me as I was slowing them down and needed to rest for a few minutes. After a short rest, I walked about half a mile, and in the middle of the route was a walking stick inserted in the center of

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# Good Samaritans to the Rescue

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the path. There was a note that read, “Mark, this is for you. Love, Justina.” I only walked with Justina and the others for less than a mile and did not see them afterwards. Good Samaritan #3

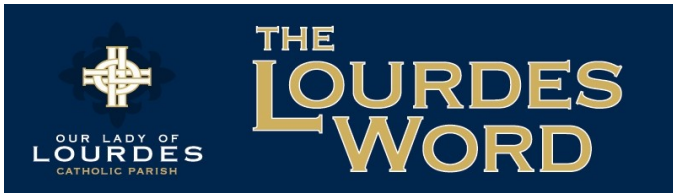


I think of these Good Samaritans often. Their kindness to me in misery pulls at my heart strings. Their actions urge me to be there for others suffering from any of the numerous injuries, falls, or problems life throws at us. Being a Good Samaritan is rarely as dramatic as assisting someone who has been assaulted or robbed. The German theologian Gerhard Lohfink wrote, “Jesus’ revolution comes not with great armies or apocalyptic signs but through the ordinary.” May being there for others in small and large matters become an ordinary revolution.

### What is Good Samaritan Law?

A law that allows a person, without expectation of payment or reward & without any duty of care or special relationship, voluntarily come forward to administer immediate assistance or emergency care to a person injured in an accident, or crash, or emergency medical condition

It protects Good Samaritans from harassment on the actions being taken by them to save the life of the road accident victims!



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Our quarterly publication of *The Lourdes Word* is an attempt for us, the followers of Christ, to publicly reflect on our faith journey. Each edition has a specific theme. In this issue, readers were asked to share their thoughts on “*Good Samaritans.*”



We invite the parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes to submit writings which they feel will help address the theme of the next publication. All submissions will be reviewed by the publication committee. Please note that due to space requirements, editing may be necessary. Therefore, please limit your submission to 525 words or fewer. The theme for the next edition will be “*Sight.*” The edited copy will be returned to the author for review before final publication. Please feel free to submit writings through the parish secretary or to Mark Hudson, [markchudson@gmail.com](mailto:markchudson@gmail.com).

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