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**2015 Day Five - Wednesday, 6/24 – St. Vincent de Paul Parish, East Haven to Hamden to St. Mary’s Parish, Portland**

We started the day after a rough night for some of us.  Some snoring going on which kept some of us awake or had us move to a different location but we survived the night.

Some of went to morning mass in the chapel with Fr. Dominic.  It was a nice service and Fr. Dominic welcomed us several times during mass. During his homily, Fr. Dominic talked about it being the feast day of John the Baptist.  I immediately thought of Fr. John Baptist from Holy Family and his morning mass.  In his homily, Fr. Dominic said how John the Baptist knew his place, knew who he was.  He asked the congregation, "do you know who you are?  Do I know who I am?

that made me think of the video we incorporated into out presentation about Matt Siracusa and his Sparrows Ministries.

See how the Holy Spirit works things right into our daily happenings.

This set the tone for a beautiful day.

We packed up the cots we slept on and packed the vehicles, mounted our bikes and off we went. We were on our way to St. Mary's in Portland with Fr. Paul Boudreau.  We had a very nice ride with few stops.  We noticed that in Durham there was no power and many home had generators going.  I kept wondering if we would have power tonight when we got to Portland.  This was all because of the big storms from yesterday.

We crossed the Portland bridge and it was mentioned that we would be going over it tomorrow on our way into Hartford as well. I like riding on that bridge although I think a couple of riders may be a bit gun shy.

We got to the parish and were warmly welcomed by Anna and Fr. Paul.  The rectory was ours and several of us got to sleep in real beds.  Joan and I had a nice room with an air conditioner.  I felt a little guilty but not for long.  Sorry team.

We all showered before dinner.  The dinner was prepared by one of the parishioners.  I believe his name was Tony but not sure. The pasta and egg plant Parmesan were excellent.  We suppered with all the volunteers that greeted us and we then prepared for the presentation.  I was set up with my own microphone while the rest of the team would use a hand held mic.

The turn out for the night was excellent in our opinion, our largest audience by far.  Fr. Paul was a little disappointed but we were ecstatic. Fr. Paul introduced us and commented on his being a good past friend of Johnnie F and also an old classmate of Tom Sacerdote.

The presentation went very well. We were on target this night.  I had some difficulty telling my Matthew story which I have told hundreds of times but still get choked up when I say it could have been Jesus.

I also tied in this mornings homily with the video and everyone seemed to gasp at each Matthew moment I mentioned.  After we finished and were going to go over and share dessert with the parishioners, Anna came over and asked if she could give me a big hug.  She was a bit emotional over my story and we hugged tightly.  I so appreciated that.

these folks were awesome.  Fr. Paul was awesome.   St. Mary's is a wonderful parish! We were all blown away.

We had wonderful conversations.  I was peaking with a few folks at one table for quite a while and when the gentleman got up to leave with his wife I then realized he was blind.  Just got a chill typing that.  He was so "normal".  we tlaked about so many things particular to social Justice.  He was a remarkable man.

I think we all felt very lucky and blessed coming to this parish.

Later we all met in the dining room to discuss the word of the day.  We had a great night of sharing with some emotion in particular.  I love this group and feel so honored and blessed to be part of this team.  I thank God for the opportunity to do this each year.  Yes, it is difficult and takes a lot of time and dedication and I get frustrated and complain some but I will not stop doing this until I can't type and email, make a phone call, solicit a parish, invite people to ride with us, and ask for assistance when needed.  I thank you all for being part of BTC.

We first discussed the time we would be leaving in the morning. That would be 8:00 as.  We were going to stop at Claire's nephew's auto garage on the other side of the Portland bridge and also stop at Tom Sacerdote's son's farm for a bit before getting into Hartford at the End Hunger CT blitz for Free Summer Meals by 10:30.

Here are our words of the day, Day 5.

Opportunity to live their Faith - Fr. Paul

donuts

not sexy

Success

Challenge - the biking and the people in poverty

More advocacy

Humor

Judgmental

Overwhelmed - Gary, Matt

Stories

Next week

Changed

Presentation - more real, focused, shorter, better - Joan

Happiness

Compassion

Thank You to new riders and Support

Faith - Renew

Matthew

Do I know who I am - Fr. Dominic

Lives should glorify God

Done by Lou