



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast *March 3, 2024*

"If You Can't Please Everyone..."

"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1 NIV)

"Three Monks and a Donkey"

Once upon a time, there were three monks who lived in a remote monastery. They were known for their wisdom and piety. One day, they decided to go on a pilgrimage to a distant temple.



As they set out on their journey, they faced a dilemma: they had only one donkey to carry their belongings. The eldest monk, wise and experienced, suggested that he should ride the donkey since he was the most respected. The other two monks agreed, and the eldest monk mounted the donkey. They began their journey.

Soon they encountered a village where the villagers were surprised to see the eldest monk riding the donkey. They wondered aloud, "Isn't that disrespectful! One monk rides while the other two walk?"

Hearing this, the eldest monk, feeling awkward dismounted and urged that the youngest monk to ride instead. The villagers nodded in approval as the youngest monk took his turn on the donkey.

Further on, they met another group of people who chastised the young monk. "Hey, you lazy monk! You ride while the older monks struggle on foot." The youngest monk felt embarrassed and got off the donkey. Knowing that he would face criticism no matter what he did, the middle-aged monk hesitated. So the monks decided to carry the donkey! They tied the donkey's legs and carried it on a pole, each monk holding the pole.

As they entered the next village, the villagers burst into laughter. "What foolish monks!" they exclaimed. "Why carry the donkey when it can walk!" The monks realized no matter what they did, someone would find fault.

Finally, they decided to let the donkey walk freely. They walked alongside it, ignoring the comments of others. They realized their intention was to reach the temple, not to please everyone they met. And so, the three monks continued their journey, sharing stories, laughing, and supporting each other. They learned that true wisdom lies not in seeking approval from others but in following their hearts and doing what is right.

The moral of the story? The story highlights the importance of humility, cooperation, and staying true to our principles and beliefs in a Christian's life, even when faced with criticism. (Did you notice that the more the brothers listened to distractions, the further "of their path" they went!) St. Paul commends us to:

*"... make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind".
(Philippians 2:2 NIV)*

May it be so! Amen! – blessings, Vance

Prayer Box: pray for healing for Joanne, Rich, Debbie, Manuel, Joycelyn, Maggie, Vance; pray for Michael's soul and his grieving family; all struggling couples; peace in Ukraine and the Middle East; those suffering from the wildfires in Texas. Lord, hear our prayers!

"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." (Matthew 18:20, NIV)