
Well, It's Not That Hard

**An article from the *Cathedral Times*
by the Rev. George Maxwell
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As we started our float down the Yellowstone River, I knew that we were headed into a memorable day. The water was clear, deep, and fast. The sky was as big as advertised. The mountains seemed to be jumping up and down in the background.

And, the wind was blowing at about fifteen knots!

Quinn and I were fishing with Lee, a friend of a friend who would soon become a friend of ours, and Collin Brown, a third generation Montanan who owns Montana's Last Best Outfitters. I could tell by the controlled loops in his cast that Lee knew what he was doing. I suspected, though, that Quinn and I might present a bit more of a challenge for Collin.

Collin was a fisherman's fisherman.

He rigged our rods to deal with the wind. He got us to all of the right places on the river, and held the boat steady against the current. Watching him read the water was like watching two independent minded partners who have been doing this very same thing together for thirty years.

But, it was Collin's grace that made the difference.

He guided by invitation. Even though he knew that we would judge him by how many fish we caught, he didn't try to catch the fish for us. He didn't tell us what to do, or try to persuade us to do what he wanted us to do. He didn't get frustrated when we couldn't get it done. He told us where the fish were and offered advice when we asked for it. But, he let us do the fishing.

He did save me from myself a couple of times, like when he pointed out that I might be able to cast a little farther if I actually let go of the stripped off line I was holding with one hand before I finished casting the fly with the other!

I don't know how Collin came to be this way. It's probably something he inherited from long hours of fishing with his grandfather. It's harder than it looks, though. It's hard to think you know what someone ought to do and not demand that they do it.

And, it's risky. There's the chance that they never get it right, of course. But, the bigger risk is that they do, and don't realize that you had anything to do with their success.

As we reached the heat of the afternoon, the wind died down and so did the fishing. I wasn't unhappy with the break, but Quinn wanted more action. At nine years old, his doesn't know about coasting yet. Quinn's foot is always down, pressing



hard on either the accelerator or the brake.

So, Quinn asked Collin if he could row the boat. He wanted to be the guide for a while. As they were changing places, the boat drifted toward the bank and Lee spotted a little ledge. He made a perfect upstream cast and let the fly float over the deeper water running along the ledge.

Just as Quinn took his place in the center of the boat and grabbed an oar, a rainbow rose and took Lee's hook. Lee landed the fish to a chorus of cheers.

After Collin coached Quinn through carefully releasing the rainbow back into the river, Quinn looked at Collin and, without a hint of irony, declared, "Well, it's not that hard."

It's Homecoming Sunday at the Cathedral. Summer is ending. Schools are beginning. It's time to come back to church.

Much will be as expected. The Ministry Fair will animate Child Hall. You'll enjoy familiar faces, warm welcomes, and summer stories.

You'll notice some unexpected things too. There's a new sidewalk at the Rumson Road entrance, a new surface on the parking lot, a new pedestrian walkway from the parking lot into the atrium, and the beginnings of a new cloister garden off of the Horseshoe Drive.

And, there will be lots of new faces. People you haven't seen before or don't really know. Some of them have been Episcopalians all of their lives. They'll be comfortable here, already knowing what questions to ask. And, some of them are new to our tradition. They're still trying to figure out how to negotiate the wind and currents of the Cathedral and the liturgy of our life together.

Homecoming Sunday is our chance to invite them to join us, to introduce ourselves to them, to share with them the possibility that exists for them here at the Cathedral, and then to guide them as they figure out for themselves how to engage us.

We'll know when we get it right. They'll look back on joining the Cathedral and think, "Well, it's not that hard."