

Bulbs of Faith

One Sunday afternoon we had a confirmation class with our mentors. I brought dirt, a pot for each mentor/confirmand to share and a bulb for each one of them. We had a short lesson on faith and how that works in our lives. We asked the mentors to discuss with their confirmand a time in their lives that their faith was tempted. Confirmands were then given time to share their own experience if they had one.

Following the discussion, each confirmand and mentor took their bulbs and the pot they were to share. We talked about the appearance of the bulbs and how while they are not very pretty, we know that once we plant them in good soil- they turn into something beautiful. That is what faith is all about. Believing in something that we cannot yet see.

Great plan. We did this in the early winter, so the idea was that I was going to take them home and force the bulbs to grow (I had already researched how to do this on the internet) and have them ready to use during our Rite of Confirmation service in May. The idea- to show the relationship between mentor and confirmand as well as give an example of faith in action.

One problem- the bulbs never grew. I waited and waited. People asked me how they were doing, and I told them that I still had faith. Finally, I took a fork and dug through the pots. Every single pot was empty. Not a single one of them still had a bulb. I should admit that I live in the woods- however, I put them outside my basement door, covered them with plastic and a sheet and waited (which is what my directions told me to do). My assumption- some sneaky squirrel dug through the pots and stole all the bulbs to put away for future use. Although I will never know the truth.

I panicked and did not tell anyone. I thought about buying red tulips as soon as they started to be sold at Wal-Mart and re plant them in all the pots. I actually loved this idea because it would give me the end result that I so desperately wanted. I just couldn't do it.

Instead, I turned it into a new lesson. We talked about how sometimes people come and try to take our faith. That even with good intentions, people come into our lives and change the things that we know to be true. That sometimes life is just hard and that while faith is a real thing- things don't always turn out the way we plan. Does that mean we don't try again? That we give up on all the other things that we hold onto? Absolutely not. The lesson turned out to have great discussion. We all learned something that day.

While that took place years ago, people still talk about it. The lesson for me- the teacher-is to expect the unexpected and be prepared to power through it. Things happen- and our best laid plans fail. Turn lemons into lemonade and enjoy the drink!