

Day 194 – Wednesday, September 30 – Open Gate

The Church and rectory that I live in are on a corner. There are a few people who cut through my back yard to get where they are going. Now to be honest I do not mind that. I myself have had to do that numerous times as a young boy, going to school or work. But what I do mind is that they leave my gate wide open. I can't understand why they don't have a smidgen of integrity; such that they shut the gate when they go through it. I have even seen a few people kick it open, probably to look cool in front of their friends. It is a metal fence, and so far there is no damage, but I don't know what the cumulative effect will be. The use of the fence by strangers is not an indication of the owner, however it does show disrespect to the one who is cutting through the yard.

The way we treat physical gates in backyards is a reflection of the way we treat the gates around our hearts; especially the hearts of those around us. We cut through the people around us, like we own them. We disrespect them by leaving open the gates around their hearts. At times we may even kick those gates open, not caring at all for their dignity.

As much as I hate this, it makes me wonder how we treat the gate into the kingdom of heaven. I can't image it is much different than my backyard gate. There are times when we mistreat it, leaving it open, disrespecting the landowner, and even attempting to force it open. The use of the fence by strangers is not an indication of the owner, however it does show disrespect to the one who is cutting through the yard.

Perhaps it is time to care for the gates in our backyard. Perhaps it is time to treat the gates around the hearts of those around us within dignity. And most importantly, we need to treat the gate into the kingdom of God with the dignity that it is due.

In the light of eternity, we're here for a very short time, really. We're here for one thing, ultimately: to learn how to love, because God is love. - James Finley

Sincerely,
Fr. Jim Kaptein