

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

The Vastness of Cathedrals, the Smallness of Me

BY NATHAN

Last week, I climbed to the top of the Washington National Cathedral. I was unaware how tall the second tallest church building in the U.S. truly was until I was standing at the top of it. No one had warned me. And if someone did, I might have decided to stay on the ground floor.

A good friend of mine who works at the Washington National Cathedral had promised to take me on a behind-the-scenes tour that is not open to the public. We wandered the crypt, stood behind the pulpit where Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his final sermon, and saw the countless carvings and stained glass windows.

We then took a small elevator up to a hallway that ended with a small wooden door with a sign that read, "No Access." Yet, my friend had a key that opened it, and we entered into a pitch black hallway made of stone that was so tight you had to hold your breath. Two steps down, we turned a corner to reveal that we were standing just below the rose window overlooking the nave of the cathedral at a height of about 600 feet.

I was unprepared for how high we were and I'm pretty sure I let out a high pitched squeal in shock. Since the acoustics are absolutely brilliant there, I'm pretty sure that high pitched squeal made its way around, in, and through the entire cathedral.

Being held back by only a small metal railing, we slowly made our way around the entire building, crawled through other small hallways, and took a spiral staircase up to another small door that led us to the roof of the building. Eventually, we climbed up to the top of the bell tower, took in the epic views, and wandered through hidden rooms as we made our way back to the nave.

Although I spent much of my time hundreds of feet in the air, touring Washington National Cathedral was a truly grounding experience.

Cathedrals are awe-inspiring. Even if you do not hold to a particular Christian tradition, the grandeur, glory, and greatness

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of cathedrals are evident and evoke something within. The same is true for temples, mosques, synagogues, or gurdwaras.

For me, their vastness reminds me of my smallness and leads me to see that which is greater than myself. They point me to the majestic and the mystical. while also connecting me with those who, for centuries, have used these spaces to encounter the Divine.

Even if you don't have plans to climb a cathedral this week, I hope you have grounding experiences that connect you to the ineffable and mystical. I hope you have moments where you realize the vastness of the beauty around you. And, I hope you find spaces where you can encounter the Sacred and Divine all around you.



Sympathies, Concerns, and Congrats

Our sympathies are extended to:

- **Lisa Womack** (Facilities Management) on the death of her uncle, Jack Hunter Williams. Link to obituary in email.

Upcoming Interfaith Holidays

March 8
Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)

March 10 - April 9
Ramadan (Islam)

March 11
Sri Ramakrishna Jayanti (Hinduism)

March 19
Ostara (Wicca/Paganism)

Dates to Remember

Weekly on Sundays in Snidow Chapel:

- 11 a.m. Worship with Church of the Covenant
- 4:30 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass (No Mass on March 10 and March 17)

March 9-17
SPRING BREAK

For more information about the Spiritual Life Center, including info on our student groups, go to our webpage - link in the email signature. You can also visit our Linkt.ree (Link is in email).