

Wednesday, April 1

Accountability

by Pastor Hank

For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:13-14).

Screenwriter, director, actor, and humorist Woody Allen once quipped: "My one regret in life is that I am not someone else."

I know the feeling. There have been moments when I too regretted that I wasn't someone else—as I suspect most people have. It is not at all uncommon for people to compare themselves to others and then to feel short-changed and inadequate.

When I was in seminary, I studied the life of St. Francis and was captivated—and, in comparison to Francis, felt short-changed and inadequate. To paraphrase Woody Allen: "My one regret in life was that I wasn't St. Francis."

Then I read an eye-opening story about a rabbi named Zusya. When Rabbi Zusya was on his deathbed, surrounded by his followers, he heard them comparing him to Moses. He shook his head and said to them: "In the coming world they will not ask me: 'Why were you not Moses?' Instead, they will ask me: 'Why were you not Zusya?'"

And so it is. In the coming world I will not be asked why I wasn't St. Francis. I am not at all accountable for not being St. Francis. But I am accountable for truly *being me*.

We are each "fearfully and wonderfully made" by a loving God. How foolish—and sad—to regret not being someone else when it is God who knit us together in our mother's womb, when it is God who loved us into being, and when it is God who asks us just to be and to do all that *we* can be and do.

It takes some work to get to know ourselves well enough to *be* ourselves, but when all is said and done we are accountable for it. Finally, the most valuable thing any of us can bring to others is ourselves.

Prayer: Loving God, thank you for loving me into existence, and for sustaining me day by day as I seek to understand more fully and to be more completely who I am in you. Amen.