

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us.*

**—Hebrews 12:1**



**THURSDAY, MARCH 30**

When I was a kid, I loved collecting rocks. While visiting a relative, I learned of a marvelous invention – a rock polisher. It was a machine with a motor that would continuously turn a coffee-can-sized cylinder. You put your rocks in the cylinder, turned it on and left it tumbling. In time those rocks bumped up against one another and broke off the sharp edges and ground down the rough spots. The rocks came out of that coffee can looking like jewels to my childhood eyes. The rocks weren't transformed into gemstones but they sure were shiny and beautiful in their own right.

So I think of church as God's tumbling coffee can for our souls. We come together and as we interact we bump into one another, sharing our conflicting ideas and diverse perspectives. In the process, our souls are polished. And not just in church. The people in our lives teach us how to be the unique person God is calling us to be. Other people are the voice of God to us.

God uses each of us to shape and teach others. So it's a good thing we're not all the same. There's a beautiful soul in each of us, and as we worship in churches full of lots of different Christian people, God makes us each more the person we are called to be, not by changing us into something we're not, but by helping each of us shine.

**—Michael Buerkel Hunn**