

32963 – 3-25-09

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### *On the Road Again*

Psychologists keep lists of the most stressful life events and their relative impacts upon us. We've been told that moving is among the most stressful of such events -- right up there with death and divorce. We're not surprised. Having moved several times ourselves, and frequently encountering others who are in the throes of moving, we have seen firsthand its emotional impact.

When we're moving, nothing seems settled. All the services and businesses upon which we rely must be notified. Our friends and family wonder where to reach us, and need updated data. An incredible array of stuff we didn't even remember we had, has suddenly surfaced to be sorted, boxed, carted, loaded, moved, unloaded and unpacked again. The job seems endless, complicated and rather disorienting. It's no wonder that moving is a stress-inducing activity! It's a totally engrossing and life-changing proposition.

But psychologists tell us that life-changing events (like moving), while they may be stressful, are also opportunities. They function like doors in the wall of the life we've been constructing. When these doors swing into view we can quickly slam them shut and try to keep as many things as possible from changing, or we can venture through the doors, and try viewing and living life from a new and different vantage point.

In other words, stressful or not, maybe a periodic "move" is good for us. When we move from our settled place we may discover the limitations of our prior points of view. We may encounter new people and places and perspectives that challenge us and keep us growing. It's no coincidence, perhaps, that in nearly every religious tradition, the life of the spirit is likened to a journey. The implication is that one never really "arrives" at the desired destination in this lifetime. One can't stay put and expect to develop his or her faith life. Jesus asked his disciples to "follow" him. He didn't say "stay where you are" or "don't budge" or "anyplace is as good as another." He said, "Follow me." In other words, Christians are expected to be on the move. If we are to continue to seek God and develop a spiritual maturity, we need to keep moving.

Nearly two thousand years ago, St. Augustine claimed that our hearts are restless until they find their rest in God. Maybe that's part of what keeps our society so mobile. Maybe there's an inborn restlessness in us that keeps us going until we finally wind up in God's very presence.

If that's so, then maybe the stress of the move is all worthwhile. At long last we shall arrive at the journey's end and find exactly the home we always sought. In the meantime, let's get on the road again!