



## Bill Joseph

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This week's assignment began with chocolate, the wrap containing a message. I enjoyed the chocolate. Am writing on the suggestion, Life is good to me.

I can honestly narrate that in most gatherings I have been an observer. That's to my benefit, for the memory isn't bad. And poets tell us, we learn nothing when talking. And like all blessed, this journey has been travelled with little and big giants, mine those last eight decades. Men and women who had something to say, spoke well, were gracious, trusted listeners to repeat their tales faithfully. And what stories they told!

For this day, my traveller is Bill Joseph. Bill was a classmate and friend to my wife's older brother, Bill Foley. The two Bills became friends as Regis High School students. Both brainy, talented in complementary Arts.

While students in High School, they painted in oils, molded in clay. They fingered a full size female head. Discarded when finished, inherited by my wife. Even today, it exhibits quality, in my estimate.

Bill Foley entered the Catholic Priesthood, somewhat a rebel, eventually left, migrated here and there, dying in 2002, leaving no "body of work". Always independent, he refused to sign any created work .. "No one is gong to profit from me after I am dead". He was that confident of his ability.

Friend Bill Joseph was an immediate success. Bill's "Columbus" statue was bought, presented to Civic Center in 1970. It is there today







The Byron Rodger Court House on 1800 California has Bill's large flat eagle insignia on the west wall.

Bill painted and sculpted all his life. On his death in 2003 a body of his work was donated to the Kirkland Museum in Denver.

When Barbara and I wed in 1951, we bought a small Ensor home at 3657 Newport Street, and found ourselves parishioners in the newly founded Cure D'ars parish. A young, vigorous curate

Fr John Haley, easily raised money for a School and Church in no time at all, northeast corner East 32 Ave and Dahlia. Those building are still there. Part of another congregation. A smaller, new Cure D'Ars Church is on the northwest corner.

Father Haley commissioned Bill Josephs to decorate that first new Church. And what fine terra cotta pieces he made. Stations of the Cross, a statue of the St John Vianney, Holy Water fonts, candle holders, the Altar and background. The Altar centered on a rugged, narrow wooden frame, no legs. Dominating inside that frame was a brown terra cotta reproduction of a mother pelican with her baby birds. Mother's beak seemingly inside her chest, the baby birds mouths open to be fed. An ancient tradition held that the mother pelican pierced her breast, the blood food for her young. Actually, she put her head down, the bill disappearing onto her breast, regurgitating food already swallowed. Thus Bill Josephs's Catho symbolism, Christ feeding His Church.

All learn beginning at birth through visual and aural symbols.

This wandering narrative, finalized Easter Sunday 2017, concludes with my memory of two exceptional Bills, and that Christian symbolism.