

Dec. 3, 2017 (Originally published sometime during the second Bush administration)

A recipe for codfish cakes

***Editor's Note:** I came upon this column that I wrote 14 years ago and felt like it was just as relevant today. Actually that's not entirely true. Most of it's just plain goofy and totally irrelevant. The truth is, I'm trying to get home for Thanksgiving and am behind schedule. Speaking of which, I hope you had a blessed very Thanksgiving celebration!*

So many thoughts, so little column space.

My Dog

I'd like to first say that a few people have spoken kindly about a recent column I wrote concerning my dog. I did pass the compliments on to my dog, who wanted everyone to know that she appreciated the comments, but that she does not leave nose prints on my truck window as I mentioned in my Thanksgiving column. She also stressed that her shedding has never caused me to be mistaken for Bigfoot, although she sometimes mistakes me for someone with "an ounce of intelligence." I explained that I was simply using creative license. She told me I should have my license revoked.

Pope John Paul II

The other night I really did dream that Bishop Gilmore and some others and I met with Pope John Paul II. He came into the room looking rather dour, so I loosened him up with a bit of good humor. Then I asked him what his favorite pizza was, and he pointed to a Domino's box sitting on his desk.

And that was about it.

TEC

Parents of juniors and seniors, be sure and send your children to the next TEC (Teens Encounter Christ) weekend (go to dcdioocese.org/youth-ministry/retreats/tec for schedule updates). I attended a TEC when I was in high school, and it truly was very rewarding. I made a lot of friends, became a lot closer to God, and had a lot of fun. I also met a girl. Boy, was she cute. A few days after the TEC was over, I called her to ask her out, and she turned me down flat. Turns out that Miss Perfect didn't want to go out with a skinny guy with a crooked nose, crooked teeth and crooked hair. Well, *your loss, toots!* Yeah, that's right! I could have shown you a great time! But noooooooo!! You were too busy being all, "*Oh, I'm so special!*" Yeah, well, my hamster is special, too, but you don't see her bragging about it.

So ... uh ... send your kids to TEC.

My book

Over the last few years, dozens of people have inquired as to when or if I may be publishing a book of my columns. Well, it was more like eight or nine people. Three would be more precise. Okay, nobody inquired. Happy?

Be that as it may, I've been taking a look into the publishing realm, only to find that whatever way I choose to go, it's going to cost nearly \$1,000. That's about \$950 more than I can afford, plus, I have no assurance that I'd sell one copy. So, after careful thought and consideration, I've decided that rather than trying to have my book published the conventional way, I'd rent a movie and get some Taco Bell.

The government

I don't know if you've heard the latest, but apparently the Bush administration is hacking into newspaper computers and altering copy that is in any way anti-Bush. A column in the *Washington Post* on Bush's military record was printed under the author's name and photo as a recipe for codfish cakes.

This cannot stand! The Bush White House must be made accountable for its actions! President Bush is quite possibly the **codfish in a bowl, cover with warm water and soak for two hours or longer, according to the saltiness and hardness of the fish. Drain, rinse and place in a saucepan with boiling water to cover. Simmer gently, covered, until fish is tender, about 15 minutes. Drop by tablespoonful into hot oil, 370F, and fry until golden brown. Drain on paper towels and serve hot.**

A strange guy in a strange land

The following is true. I was once lost in London, walking around for hours with two big bags, asking people for directions to my hotel.

I have no sense of direction. I once lost my car in a multi-level mall parking lot for three hours. I found that London is much, much bigger than a parking lot.

A few years later, I found myself being threatened with arrest by customs agents on the British Island of Tortola. I was employed on the tiny island, but it seemed I didn't have my papers in order. So, when I left the island and tried to return, Customs was none too happy. I was briskly pulled from the long line of people awaiting entry and put into a little room where I was asked if I'd like to spend the night in jail. I wondered if it might be a trick question, but decided that "no" would be the wisest reply.

Amid all the anxiety and fear I experienced, what I remember most vividly are the instances of true kindness. Any smile, any genuine desire to help me, still stands out in my memory.

God was at work in people's hearts; God brought me hope and courage through others.

I was just thinking that we really need to be that same conduit of hope for thousands of others facing a similar situation in the United States.

... So many thoughts, so little column sp-