A PAIR OF PARABLES

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Father Ed Hays tells the stories of

"The Little Tin Box"

As Tom and Mary see their farm and all their possessions go on the auction block, it looks like they've lost everything...or have they? Hays' poignant story of triumph and tragedy will leave you with a clearer appreciation for what's really valuable in your own life.

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"The Magic Fishbowl"

Some people change their lives and expand their horizons quite easily. Most of us though, find change threatening to our comfortable little world, our "Fishbowl." Fr. Hays shows us that change is not only natural, but through faith is part of our destiny.

PRESENTER'S GUIDE

PREPARATION

Pre-view THE PROGRAM in its entirety, well in advance of the scheduled showing.

Make certain that the equipment is compatible with the format of your video tape.

A 19-inch television set (measure screen diagonally) accommodates a group of 25 people.

BEFORE VIEWING

"THE LITTLE TIN BOX" is about many things: possessions, life and death, intimacy, human fulfillment. But perhaps most importantly, it is about remembering and memories. Jesus said, "Without me, you have nothing." What did he mean? How do we "have" Jesus? He also said, "Do this, in memory of me."

For Jesus and the people of his time, memory was not about causal reminiscence. To remember something was to reawaken it. Jesus wanted us to remember him-everything about him - with deep intensity. Fr. Hays' story of Mary and Tom puts us in touch with this kind of remembering: remembering that is so strong it reaches beyond even death.

AFTER VIEWING

1. How important are memories to you? What are the most important ones? Why are these so important? What happens when you share memories with friends and family?

2. Do you agree with the advice Tom got from his uncle: the only reason for wealth and possessions is memories?

3. For you, what is the relationship between Tom's tin box being filled to the brim and his death?

4. What are the tin boxes in your life? What's (who's) in them?

How much do they mean to you?
How do you show that you value these things? Do you share their contents with just anyone?

5. Jesus knew that memory was crucial to faith. He also knew that the only way we could "possess" him was in our memories. What is your tin box of "Jesus memories" filled with? How do you treasure it?

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STEREO. 1/2 HOUR RECOMMENDED FOR FAMILIES AND GROUPS.

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Discussion/Reflection Guide

BEFORE VIEWING

"THE MAGIC FISHBOWL" is about faith and how it works in our lives. Often, when we think about faith we think about what we believe. In this program, Fr. Hays asks us to explore something different - not faith as a collection of beliefs and dogmas, but faith as a mind-set or disposition toward all of life.

Consider: St. John tells us that Jesus, at his final meal with his friends, prayed, "Father, that they all may be one!" Jesus wanted our faith to help us unify and integrate our lives. Does your faith expand your world or contract it?

or

Is there something you used to believe but don't believe any-more? (not necessarily in religious terms) How has this change in belief changed you, your attitudes toward life?

AFTER VIEWING

1. In what ways does faith/religion set up boundaries which separate and divide people from one another?

2. Fr. Hays presents a positive relationship between our use of imagination and our faith. Is there such a relationship in your life? How?

3. The fish and fishbowl are a constant metaphor in the program. At the end, the fish is abroad in a wider world. Are we afraid of the wider world? How do we show that fear?

4. The "parable" in the program is, of course, not scriptural. But, its purpose is the same as the parables of the Gospels. What was the point of this parable for you?

5. Throughout the program, Fr. Hays makes the connection between the world of science/technology and the world of faith. Too often, expansion of our scientific consciousness is not accompanied by an expansion of our faith-consciousness. The result can be that hope dwindles. Do you find hope dwindling? How? What's needed to overcome a loss of hope? Can it be that we have allowed our faith-vision to shrink when, indeed, we should be nurturing its expansion?