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There go I

Sr. Rose Pacatte | Sep. 24, 2009 NCR Today

I had some sad news this morning. It came out of nowhere.

Someone I have known for several years, someone very talented and genuinely prayerful and good, entered rehab for a gambling addiction. For several moments, I was stunned.

As I try to wrap my head around this information, clichés drop in and out of my consciousness and sorrow. The default reassurance is the refrain in my head: There go I, but for the grace of God.

But no. No! I cannot comfort my soul at the expense of anyone. For in fact, there go I.

I am that person entering the door of one rehab haven or another, emptying pockets, shedding one life for another, feeling guilt, desperation, unworthiness and shame. Wanting to be alone just to cry.

I am that person, for I, too, am weak and human and in need of grace.

There go I.

There go I but for the grace of God may be true, but this phrase does not free me to be a friend, a neighbor.

This saying can let me walk away.

But am I coming or going?

There go I.

I, too, am a human being in need of as much forgiveness, grace, and love, as the next.

There go I.

And when Christ seems most distant and hope as remote as the illusive rainbow, like right now, my favorite Gospel passage pushes through from my heart's memory, "Were not our hearts burning within us as he walked with us along the way?" (Luke 24:32)

There go I.

I pray that my friend will join the disciples, me, and all of us who rise, fall, see, listen, doubt, believe, weep, and rise again to make amends, on this dusty, Emmaus walk.

May my friend feel Christ burning within, for this is grace, and grace can be enough.

The Emmaus walk is a crowded street. And there is always room for one more. There is enough Christ-fire for

all.

There we go.

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