I was fortunate to do my hospital chaplaincy rotation with a young seminarian who was ordained about three years after our summer experience. Tom and I became good friends. He came to my wedding and I went to his ordination. My children forever referred to him as young Fr. Tom. He has been a blessing to me and my family.

When he was ordained, I tried my hand at writing a song as a gift for him. He was so eager and willing to preach the Gospel wherever he was sent that I wanted to mark that in some way. One lyric I wrote went like this: “Finding our homes where we can share your word, only to leave again when it’s been heard...to be your people.” Fr. Tom serves in Africa now, training other seminarians, and I often think of him and of that song because I have come to realize that we are all called to share God’s word whether we are in a comfortable place or a strange one. Perhaps part of our challenge is to leave the areas where we are comfortable and welcomed for those where the path is rougher and less clear, but the need for the Good News is all the greater.

Today our models are Paul and his companions, who travel from place to place to preach the Gospel and move on when they have done what they can. They follow Jesus' command to love and find the glory of the Lord in that work and in whom they serve. If we are to be God’s people, we, too, must spread the hope of God’s love to all we meet, even if we have to travel far to do so.

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A Word From Pope Francis

“Every Christian is called to go out to meet others, to dialogue with those who do not think as we do, with those who have another faith or who have no faith. To encounter all, because for what we all share in common is that we were created in the image and likeness of God.”

—Address to Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, October 14, 2013