

Then Zoocy goes on to say, "But I'll tell you a terrible secret—*There isn't anyone out there who isn't Seymour's Fat Lady.* That includes your Professor Tupper, buddy. And all his . . . cousins by the dozens. There isn't anyone *anywhere* that isn't Seymour's Fat Lady."<sup>1</sup>

## Meeting Jesus

The pastor of a large inner-city congregation established a soup kitchen in the basement of his church to help feed the many derelicts and homeless people who hung around that part of the city. These needy folk flocked to the church day in and day out to get the help they needed to survive.

Over time, these derelict and homeless people began to wander into the eleven o'clock Sunday worship service at the church. The upper-middle-class folks who worshiped at that time felt uncomfortable with such lower-class visitors. Eventually, one of the church leaders took the pastor aside and asked him, "Do these people have to be here with us? Can't we provide a special service just for them?"

The pastor answered, "Well, I think everybody should have a chance to meet Jesus face to face."

"Of course," said the deacon, "everybody should have a chance to meet Jesus. I think they should have the same opportunities to meet Jesus face to face as we all do."

The pastor shot back, "I'm not talking about them! I'm talking about you!"

I'm sure that gave the deacon a lot to think about. The pastor

A friend of mine was taking a tour of an inner-city church with a huge social ministry that included a soup kitchen. He was there just before the noon hour. The kitchen crew had gathered in a huddle to pray before they opened the door and let in the hungry street people. Among the prayers lifted up was one by an elderly African-American woman who simply said, "Lord, we know You'll be comin' through the line today, so help us to treat You well!"

had made it clear that what he really needed was to encounter Jesus in the homeless people who wandered into that church Sunday after Sunday. Such encounters sanctify us.

## Sharing Coffee

If you need some good stories, just come to Philadelphia and wander around the streets downtown. You will meet many wonderful people and have many varied experiences. You will certainly come away enriched by some strange encounters.

One day, about the noon hour, I was walking down Chestnut Street when I noticed a bum walking toward me. He was covered with dirt and soot from head to toe. There was filthy stuff caked on his skin. But the most noticeable thing about him was his beard. It hung down almost to his waist and there was rotted food stuck in it. The man was holding a cup of McDonald's coffee and the lip of the cup was already smudged from his dirty mouth. As he staggered toward me, he seemed to be staring into his cup of coffee. Then, suddenly, he looked up and he yelled, "Hey, mister! Ya want some of my coffee?"

I have to admit that I really didn't. But I knew that the right thing to do was to accept his generosity, and so I said, "I'll take a sip."

As I handed the cup back to him I said, "You're getting pretty generous, aren't you, giving away your coffee? What's gotten into you today that's made you so generous?"

The old derelict looked straight into my eyes and said, "Well . . . the coffee was especially delicious today, and I figure if God gives you something good, you ought to share it with people!"

I thought to myself, *Oh, man. He has really set me up. This is going to cost me five dollars.* I asked him, "I suppose there's something I can do for you in return, isn't there?"

The bum answered, "Yeah! You can give me a hug!" (To tell the truth, I was hoping for the five dollars.)

He put his arms around me and I put my arms around him. Then