Chadian Sister Engages Kansas City Youth about Peace and Justice

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I Was Asked to Talk about My Life

Interview with Mr. James Wright of the Office of Marketing and Communications of the University

“Could you tell me about your life?”

Speak about myself? Uh, that’s not so easy. Why would I unpack and reveal myself before unknown people?

For a “good cause” apparently.

“It will help students and teachers to know you and approach you in the context of the Buchanan Initiative for Peace and Nonviolence."
Where did this sudden fear come from? Fear of speaking about myself and my experience of life? A voice inside me whispered, “Isn’t it for this that you have came here?”

One must not shirk from one’s mission but face it. Victor Hugo explained: “When I speak to you about me, I speak to you about you. How can you not feel it?”

To speak about oneself is to assume history. Stories of wonderful and of painful things that have shaped us.

In speaking about ourselves, we acknowledge our share in others’ troubles and recognize that we too have suffered from evil and learned from ensuing wounds.

To speak about myself is to recall memories of what has built me, a story of faithfulness and unfaithfulness, but it is my story.

To speak about my life is to acknowledge the gestures, words, and choices that have constructed me. In that case, then yes, I want to speak about myself, that is, share, tell and talk about this path of life which is mine. A life no doubt odd and ordinary. But a life nonetheless!

Who I am today, I owe to others. Testimonies of life have fed, formed, and forged me. Others’ lives have motivated and inspired my experience and commitments. When experiences of others meet mine, I am guided and encouraged and strengthened in my convictions. I am liberated. Freedom grows in me, and I grow, quite simply, in humanity.

Sharing experiences of struggle, liberation and freedom humanizes us.

The thought of sharing about my life makes me think of the Constitution of the sisters of St. Joseph, which explains how we want to share with kinfolk and the whole of humanity this life, this happiness, this freedom, so that everybody
recognizes and experiences human dignity, divinity and fellowship.

Such is the meaning I wish to bring to my experience of “activist in residence” at Avila University.