



St. Michael's Church
Sunday 26 July 2020
Richard Grimball

In September of 1985, I made a trade. It was the first time that I made a trade of any significance. I was 19 years old and just finished my freshman year at the College of Charleston. I also managed not to pass a single class. Having spent four years at an all boys' boarding school, beaches, barley, and bikinis blurred my academic vision. In September I participated in an Outward Bound Course at Table Rock North Carolina. It was a 28 day course, and towards the end one of my instructors asked me to make a trade. She wanted to trade a first edition Outward Bound Quote Book for a blue sweater that I wore at dinner time. At the end of each day—having hiked, rock climbed, or whitewater canoed—we would gather as a group and talk about the day. I would always wear that sweater, as it was comfortable and reminded me of my grandfather. It was dark blue, light weight, and had a small folded collar and three buttons near the neck.

I'm not sure if my instructor still has the sweater, but 35 years later I still have the book of quotes...the trade we made still holds its value. There are three quotes that I marked 35 years ago, and I still return to them this day. The first is from a novel by Morris L. West called *The Shoes of the Fisherman*: "It takes so much to be a full human being that there are very few who have the enlightenment or the courage to pay the price. One has to abandon altogether the search for security and reach out to the risk of living with both arms." The second is from Nadine Stair, an 85 year old woman from Louisville, Kentucky who penned the following words in a poem: "If I had my life to live over again, I'd try to make more mistakes next time. I would relax. I would limber up. I would be sillier than I have this trip. I know of very few things I would take seriously. I would be crazier. I would be less hygienic. I would take more chances. I would take more trips. I would climb more mountains, swim more rivers, and watch more sunsets. I would burn more gasoline. I would eat more ice cream and fewer beans. I have actual problems and fewer imaginary ones." And the last—my favorite—is called the Outward Bound Recipe by Derek Pritchard: "**Select** 10 strangers and **remove** social dependencies like tobacco, spouses, friends, wristwatches, and alcohol. **Place** on the edge of a pan that is filled with the unusual and stressful circumstances. **Give** a slight push and watch to see that all are fully immersed. **Add** the opportunity to learn and master skills. Shake a sprinkle of natural grandeur. **Stir** in a soup can of skilled instructors, and **simmer** carefully for 26 days. **Skim** off the fat and deep-freeze until needed."

We see in today's readings that Jesus has His own recipe as well, though His is not just for 26

