



THE HIGH PLAINS PREACHER

Welcome to the High Plains Preacher, stories about the Bible, high wind, fast horses, lack of moisture and other elements of life in the Texas Panhandle

You Are Here

by Fr. Jim Schmitmeyer

Country singer Jason Aldean sings a song called “Flyover Country.” It’s about two businessmen on a plane looking out the window “*at miles and miles of cornfields and little towns with funny names.*”

“*Who’d want to live down there?*” they ask.

By the end of the song, however, we hear about “*a girl from Amarillo*” who just might make someone “*put down stakes in those flyover states.*”

If you’ve ever been on a road trip, you know that some of those “*little towns with funny names*” actually carry biblical names. I once pastored a church in Goshen, Ohio, named for the place where the patriarch Jacob reunited with his long-lost son, Joseph. Just down the road from Goshen was the town of Mt. Orab, named in honor of the place where God gave the Law to Moses.

Here in the Panhandle we have the town of Nazareth. Just up the road is a town called Umbarger. The original name of Umbarger town was Bethlehem.

These towns remind me the red stars on maps at the entrances of places like Palo Duro Canyon or Wonderland Amusement Parks. Beneath those red stars are the words, “You are here.” We appreciate those red stars because they help us orient ourselves when we find ourselves standing in an unfamiliar place.

In a similar way, towns with biblical names can assist us in navigating the geography of our spiritual life.

Perhaps you’ve passed through Goshen recently, a place where, like Jacob, you embraced a family member you had not seen for many years. Or you’ve been to Pool of Siloam, waiting there with the sick, for a healing visit from the Lord. Or maybe you’re getting ready to celebrate a wedding in Dallas but, in your soul, you know you’re setting out for Cana.

Time and again, if we have eyes to see, the Lord places a red star on the map and says, “You are here. And I am here with you. I know where the road leads. Come with me and I will show you the way.”

