

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark

The Bandera Prophet

I was baptized in St. Stanislaus Catholic Church in Bandera in the year 1947. I don't remember much about the ceremony but I guess that is true of most folks. Now there was another baptism of sorts later on and I remember every little detail associated with that one.

This second baptism wasn't anything official. At least not in the true sense of the word. I'm referring to the Medina River baptism that all the kids growing up around here were exposed to at an early age. It is something that will never be forgotten by those of us who experienced it. There wasn't much those sacred waters couldn't wash away. We waded around in the mud along the banks and even had wrestling matches in the mud we created at "the swing" by splashing water up on the dirt bank until it was impossible to stand. One quick dip in those cool green waters and all transgressions were instantly forgiven.

Many times we drove our cars into the shallow old wagon crossing just below the Silver Spur Bridge to give them a good cleaning. No soap was need. Just buckets to throw water and a few rags for scrubbing was all that was needed. Cars being what they were back in the day sometimes they had to dry out a little before they would start. It was always a bonus when the girls showed up in bathing suits to help out.

After a long hot day of hauling hay the first thought on our minds was getting to the river for instant relief from the itchy sweaty dirt and grime. Even after I began working in San Antonio I often ended my day in the same way.

Something else I have come to realize later in life is the cleansing of the mind that occurred when I was hurting and looking for some kind

reasoning in troubled times. The river was always a place where some solitude could be had in times of heartbreak or when seeking a quiet place to sort out a problem. I still enjoy a slow walk along the Medina River these days and I usually have a rod and reel to help divert any troubling thoughts I might be having.

In many ways the face of the river doesn't resemble what I remember of earlier times but I'm blessed to have had that baptism of water as I was Growing Up In Bandera to help drench the baptism of fire that often plagues our daily lives.

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