

# The Bandera PROPHET

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## Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark  
The Bandera Prophet

One of the struggles we faced as kids in an earlier Bandera was living with a big family in a one bathroom house. Getting ready for church on Sunday morning or preparing for a trip to San Antonio on a Saturday could best be described as an orchestra of chaos with my mom being the conductor. It was not a situation unknown to others in the area when large families were quite common.

While sharing the bathroom with my brothers and dad during boys time there were things going on that I didn't fully understand at the time. As my dad was standing at the lavatory shaving there was a continuous small stream of water coming out of the faucet and a steady tapping sound as he cleared the razor. I didn't understand the water running as I could recall my mother hollering out the kitchen window, "You kids turn that water off out there. I won't be able to pay the water bill."

As I grew older and started shaving with a razor I understood the tapping and the water stream connection. Back then we knew when the smell of Ice Blue Aqua Velva aftershave filled the air it was getting close to departure time.

If we were headed for church the girls were sure to be spending more than an adequate amount of time in front of the mirrors and then there would be last minute panic as they searched for something to wear on their head. Not sure why that was required back in the day. For me the most irritating thing was having to pass my mom's ear inspection. That usually ended with kleenex tissues moistened with spit to do some final touch up. Those same tissues often served as the girls head cover too when nothing else was available.

I'm not sure why only the older people were allowed to sit at the back of the church. Men like Ben Pyka, Vincent Anderwald, my great uncle Phil Kindla and Granddaddy Kindla were always at the very rear pews. I think they were put there to report on kids who were absent from their Sabbath Day duty. Brother Eddie and I only skipped church one time and I still feel guilty about it.

They needn't have worried about me because I was usually doing early mass duty as an altar boy. On the Sundays I served, Ben Pyka would give me a quarter after services were finished.

I get strange reactions when I tell people about my altar boy adventures while Growing Up In Bandera. It's like they expect to see a halo or some sign that I'm not fibbing about all the time I spent at the altar.

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