

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

October 23, 2012 at 8:00am

---

## The kingdom of heaven is like a big car wash

by James Behrens

Soul Seeing

It was a wonderful car wash. It was not far from where I lived as a kid. It was on Grove Street. The Erie-Lackawanna train tracks stretched a block or so to the south and Fuzzy's Gulf gasoline station was just north of the car wash.

There were lots of bells and dings and whistles. As cars entered the gas station and passed over tubes that lay across the pavement, a bell would ring in the gas station office and Fuzzy or one of his attendants would come out to pump the gas, check the oil, and wipe the windshield.

When a train approached, its whistle would blow and the gates of the railroad crossing would waver a bit, and then its bells would ring and the gates would come down as the train cars passed.

The car wash had a dinging sound of its own. The only bell was the little one in the cash register that rang a few times when the drawer popped open.

Of course, there were the sounds of the water being forced through tubes, the swishing of the big brushes, the low rumble of the gears and chains as it slowly pulled the cars through the washing tunnel.

The car wash had almost everything for cleansing, waxing, polishing, drying and, I might add, even survival.

I would pull into the entrance and a man guided me so that my front tires rested on the metal track. I missed more than a few times but the man was always patient. He would wave me back a bit and then beckon me forward.

Once I got the alignment right, he came and opened the door and I would get out and head into the area



**Links:**

[1] <https://www.ncronline.org/donate?clickSource=article-end>