

Extracted from St John Vianney April 01, 2012 Bulletin

Palm Sunday 2010 Rambling by Carl Beyer and Friends

Our family is now down to four dogs and three cats, which means we lost a dog. In November we rescued a young dog, under two years of age, and this is the one we lost. She was in pretty poor shape when we found her and we believe she died of septic shock. We were with her until her last breath and made every attempt to keep her comfortable. Although we had not had her long enough to have become TOO attached, it was quite sad for our family.

This experience made me think about what our ancestors must have faced before we had “modern medicine.” In centuries, even decades, ago it was not uncommon to lose children before the age of five. The heartbreak those families endured is overwhelming to ponder. I am sure, just as today, some families who suffered losses grew closer to God, while others became bitter. We would all like to believe that in such a difficult circumstance we would turn to God, but just as Jesus knew that Peter, who became our first pope, would deny him repeatedly, so too will we lesser men and women. Yet, like Peter, we lesser humans receive His forgiveness.

Can you imagine Jesus’ mother, Mary, and her pain as she watched her Son being flogged, scourged and then crucified? I imagine she would have freely traded places with her Son to save him from the anguish, even though she understood God’s plan. How often do we, as parents, wish we could take on, and take away from our children, their pain? Logically, we know our children have lessons to be learned, but how we wish they did not have to endure the pain in the process!

Now, let us take it one step further and remember that we are The Children of God. How He must suffer, seeing us in pain, but realizing that our growth is dependent upon our experiencing pain along with joy. How can we appreciate the JOY if we do not feel the suffering? I know I never feel better than I do after I have gotten over being sick. We can walk around every day in perfect health without appreciating our health, until it is taken away from us.

Of course, I am not advocating nor encouraging suffering and pain, but simply acknowledging that it is a part of human life. On the scale of history, we are so fortunate to live in the times we do. Our lives are relatively easy compared to those folks living in previous centuries, but on the flip side that means that most of us probably do not appreciate the ease of our lives. If I had to walk in the shoes of our ancestors, I might have a very different perspective. Seriously, can you compare our lives with those who suffered through the Spanish Influenza of 1918 that killed as many as 25 million people in its first 25 weeks....a million souls lost in a week? Or the plague of the 17th century in Germany and Europe which inspired the Oberammergau Passion Play, or the great Potato Famine of Ireland in the 1800’s which brought many Irish Catholic immigrants to the U.S.....or the Great Depression....I pray we never have to experience anything like these again.

This coming week is Holy Week, during which Jesus’ enormous suffering for us resulted in his Resurrection on Easter. We would all do well to do MORE than attending Sunday Mass. We might take extra time to learn about Our Faith, to realize WHY we celebrate Easter and the events of Christ’s life leading to it, and to Pray. While Our Lord’s Resurrection on Easter Sunday

is The Big Event and very important to our Faith, no less important is the Suffering He endured for ALL of Us.

Happy Palm Sunday. Go forth and live your faith. God Bless You All.