

County-Wide Chaplaincy

Thanks you!

April 2023

New Life

As we make our way through these dreary days of cold and rain and yes, even snow, it is encouraging to remember that Spring will come! With it will come new life; blossoms of color begin to brighten our world, the sun shines out more frequently, even the sight and sound of baby birds and newborn animals! Spring, it is like it slips in and slides up next to us and encourages us that the cold and dreary will pass.

In the same way, I think we are called, or given opportunity, to slide in next to someone who is hurting or questioning or just overcome with dreary. Lately I have been reminded how encouraging it is to talk with someone who can truly relate to what I am going through. Just to hear, yes, I know what you mean, I know how that feels, I have walked that same path, I understand. These are such words of comfort to the heart!

Our chaplains are meeting people in the darkest hours of their lives, and they come with compassion and comfort and understanding. They are there to help when it hurts, mostly just to listen and empathize and express, "I am here for you, while you breathe in this new shocking reality in your life. Yes, this hurts!"

We must not forget why any of us are able to do this! 2 Corinthians 1:3-5 tells us, "All praises belong to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. For He is the Father of tender mercy and the God of endless comfort. He always comes alongside us to comfort us in every suffering so that we can come alongside those who are in any painful trial. We can bring them this same comfort that God has poured out upon us. And just as we experience the abundance of Christ's own sufferings, even more of God's comfort will cascade upon us through our union with Christ." TPT

Wow! Talk about a beautiful "trickle down". We go through trials and sufferings, Christ meets us there and pours out His comfort. Others go through trials and sufferings and we are enabled to come alongside them and share comfort and encouragement. What a beautiful picture!

As we enter this season of Easter, we are reminded that Christ paid the ultimate price for us. He suffered the ultimate disgrace, but that is not the end of the story. He is alive and He is at work and He is there for us! He is our strength, He is our refuge, He is always there for us, to help when it hurts.

Jan Richards

Easter falls on April 9th this year. I like to call it Resurrection Day since this holiday was established to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. At least three times, He informed His disciples in advance that He would be killed and be raised on the third day.

"From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day." (NAU Matthew 16:21)

"And while they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, 'The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men; and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day.' And they were deeply grieved." (NAU Matthew 17:22-23)

"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised up." (NAU Matthew 20:18-19)

Yet, when Jesus was resurrected on the third day just as He said, and the news was reported to His disciples, they responded with disbelief.

"But these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them." (NAU Luke 24:11)

Earlier, just before Jesus raised Lazarus four days after his death, He made an astonishing statement:

"I am the resurrection and the life; he who trusts in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and trusts in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" (ALW John 11:25-26)



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God has set eternity in our hearts. Here we have an offer of resurrection, life without end. Do we believe Him?

Al Walter, Chaplain

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