

**I came so that they may have life and have it more abundantly.** John10.10

### EASTER THOUGHTS

A key ingredient is never found in the recipe of any cookbook. Hope. The cook has to give some attention to it and possibly the exalted chef is racked with a concern. "I hope they like it."

My mother frequently commented in placing on a table, an offering, "It's just a little something....I hope you like it". She imparted a hope as if we were supposed to include hope within the blessing before the meal. The clean plate dismissed hope's relevancy. She was just being her humble self.

Easter has hope as a foundational virtue. As one of the theological virtues, hope is never intended to see the plate go empty. It is a bridge within the now and the eternal future. Christ brought hope to the level of a truth. Hope is there to hang onto the truth and share it.

And yet, we can resist foundational hope and direct too much attention towards only modest causes. "I hope you feel better. I hope you have a great day. I hope you like the movie. I hope you make your connection with the Atlanta flight". Can it be said that there is a hierarchy of hope? And therein lies a dangerous circumstance: Can I misplace hope from the important to the not so important. "I hope your team wins the soccer match!" It surely doesn't matter....that much.

History has often traveled through some painful times of depravity where all hope appeared to come up empty. The pain persisted. Scripture is a constant invitation to bring hope home to a God who never leaves us orphans. At a sight of a terrorist bomb, one can see in the aftermath all those people on cellphones. Are they praying with a friend? Imagine if they were and how that could be a link to true hope that cannot be extinguished. Hope takes pain and joy out of time.

Easter is the most profound hope ever. It made so many of man's hopes drastically trivial. Indeed, Easter may have brought hope to an end. How can a Resurrection within Christ's story be improved upon? If it is an end, why do we not ask one another about hoping for?

Need an upgrade to a slow conversation moment? Ask a solid friend, "I hope you make it to heaven!" You may have to repeat it. And yet, the questioner and the questioned both are well aware from Christ's judgement in scripture, that not all will make it. Choice is what feeds a hope.

Christ imparts freedom with allowing for choice of behaviors, values, that will place us on either his right or his left in judgement. I am fortunate to have a few close friends, deeply immersed in a wealth of faith, who are able to impart a message of hoping that I make the right choices. I find them both bothersome and keenly invitational in my need. Do not cut short knowing the saints.

We all have need of keen and correct teaching and responding fervently:

"People with hope, live differently" Pope Benedict

Honored to keep in touch with folks trying to live differently, Happy Easter.

Fr. Raymond Cotter

Pastor / Christ the King - Acme / 2016

HOPE IS TOO IMPORTANT NOT TO OFER SOME PRACTICAL THOUGHTS, EVEN FROM THE SECULAR:

“An Emotion We Need More of”

Research:

Higher level of Hope: Sleep and exercise better. Eat more healthy food. Fewer colds. Less hypertension and diabetes. More likely to survive cancer. Less depression. Students have higher grades. Better prediction of finishing college than SAT or ACT scores. Couples are more satisfied and more likely to last. Hope is a belief, has a strategy, a plan. Hope is contagious. Four components: **Attachment** – trust and connection to another person; **mastery or empowerment** – feeling of being strong and have people validate your strengths; **Survival** – belief you are not ever trapped...always a way out; **\*spirituality** - a belief in something larger than yourself.

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Christ the King parish is delighted to be one of five Catholic parishes in the greater Traverse City area. Since 1985, the parish has continued a vibrancy with some founding members still leading the way. We now claim about 400 members with a steady reception of new members. We are finding ourselves continually strengthened by young and old alike...family, and single. We value highly educating our young and old in religious programs. We have a multitude of engagements of causes, programs, and well long founded national and regional undertakings. Faith is never practiced alone.

As Roman Catholic, we cherish the leadership of Pope Francis in setting us apart from the routine and demeaning of being stuck within the secular. He calls us to be a contradiction. His current declaration of a Year of Mercy exalts that.

Prayer must be our life blood as Christ taught us to prayer, always connected with His father, and keeping the Sabbath very holy. Our liturgical prayer of the Eucharist is the highest prayer. We celebrate Mass with our Sunday Eucharist as most formidable: Always 5:00 on Saturday evening. Sunday at 10:00. Memorial weekend through Labor Day weekend Sunday mass changes to 9:00 and 11:00.

A parish weakness is that of all churches - not having more of the neighbors gathering to worship. International and national trends are alarming. We need to evangelize and welcome. Since the time of Abraham, religion has always been celebrated within a community. NO WHERE in scripture are the people not attached to a community.

A traveler, a visitor – superb – keep coming back. You likely may never lose His way, your HOPE.\*