

Priest's Corner #59--A Pastoral Letter--**Light and Darkness Coexisting for Centuries**

Dear St. Brendanites:

As we said Sunday, "Pittsburgh wakes this morning a *new city*--changed forever. God, however, has not changed!" The first part above seems undeniable and very real to most of us; the second part may feel a bit "iffy" though. Some may be thinking, "I wonder how God can let this happen." Some might simply question whether God cares or exists. Others tend to become more reliant on God at times like this. Still others remain neutral at best. The first thing I'd like to say is that wherever you are, God can handle it. It's OK. Faith ebbs and flows. This is why community is so important. There's always someone up when we are down, and there's others taking action when we seem unable to do so, We get by with "little help from our friends." It's important during these times to remind each other that light and darkness has coexisted for centuries.

I attended a meeting early Tuesday morning. As three of us were reflecting on these events, one of the group reminded us that from all time "light and darkness coexisted." This is nothing new and we made it through. Another went further and observed that when the two do interact; they do not interact equally. When you are in the light, you might notice darkness but you quickly lose track of it. It takes conscious effort to stay focused on it because there's always a nicer thing that's lit up waiting to grab our attention. On the other hand, when we are in darkness, even the slightest ray of light makes a supreme, lasting difference. Ever experience how the slightest break in your window shade makes that dot of light so huge that continued sleep becomes next to impossible?

Might this notion be a healthy way to navigate the confusion we are now experiencing? From my viewpoint, people are really reaching out (signs of light). I've gotten more calls, texts and emails around the events of last Saturday than around any other issue to date. Also, you seem to be talking with each other about this anti-semitic attack and the after shock. More light! In the Episcopal Church we often hear this sentence repeated, "As long as we are talking to each other, things will be well." So keep talking and sharing and letting others know how you're seeing things, when you're going to marches and attending Memorial Services. Let us know what God is putting on your heart and what you're doing about it. Invite others into what you're doing.

Sage advice given to me years ago when things were tumultuous in my life, "Don't wait to think your way into new action; Act your way into new thinking." A huge act of darkness came our way last Saturday. It wants to envelope us. Your reaching out and

talking, your presence at rallies/memorials and making donations to help, your calls to Jewish acquaintances, friends, relatives just to let them know your thinking about them, your intentional attempts on google to better understand organizations like HIAS (Hebrew Immigration Aid Society) are all dots of light that dispel darkness and hate.

Know that St. Brendan's has a team of clergy listeners who love St. Brendan's and are eager to be present to you. In addition to me (Regisjs@verizon.net) , we have the Reverends Moni McIntyre (mmcin@aol.com), Rodge Wood (rodgewood@aol.com), and Bill Pugliese (wjpugliese@aol.com). You don't have to have major issues to contact one of us. Please consider us as among those with whom you get by with "little help from your friends."

All good to you,
Regis+