

SOUL CARE

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Copied.

A Beautiful Heart

One day a young man was standing in the middle of the town proclaiming that he had the most beautiful heart in the whole valley. A large crowd gathered and they all admired his heart for it was perfect. There was not a mark or a flaw in it. Yes, they all agreed it truly was the most beautiful heart they had ever seen. The young man was very proud and boasted more loudly about his beautiful heart.

Suddenly, an old man appeared at the front of the crowd and said, "Why, your heart is not nearly as beautiful as mine."

The crowd and the young man looked at the old man's heart. It was beating strongly, but full of scars, it had places where pieces had been removed and other pieces put in, but they didn't fit quite right and there were several jagged edges. In fact, in some places there were deep gouges where whole pieces were missing.

The people stared – how can he say his heart is more beautiful, they thought?

The young man looked at the old man's heart and saw its state and laughed. "You must be joking," he said. "Compare your heart with mine, mine is perfect and yours is a mess of scars and tears."

"Yes," said the old man. "Yours is perfect looking but I would never trade with you. You see, every scar represents a person to whom I have given my love – I tear out a piece of my heart and give it to them, and often they give me a piece of their heart which fits into the empty place in my heart. But, because the pieces aren't exact, I have some rough edges, which I cherish, because they remind me of the love we shared. Some times I have given pieces of my heart away, and the other person hasn't returned a piece of his heart to me. These are the empty gouges – giving love is taking a chance. Although these gouges are painful, they stay open, reminding me of the love I have for these people too. I hope someday they may return and fill the space I have waiting. So now do you see what true beauty is?"

The young man stood silently with tears running down his cheeks. He walked up to the old man, reached into his perfect, young, and beautiful heart, and ripped a piece out. He offered it to the old man with trembling hands.

The old man took his offering, placed it in his heart and then took a piece from his old scarred heart and placed it in the wound in the young man's heart. It fit, but not perfectly, as there were some jagged edges.

The young man looked at his heart, not perfect anymore but more beautiful than ever, since love from the old man's heart flowed into his. They embraced and walked away side by side.

May we never underestimate the power of giving from the heart.

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Department Operations

Office Hours: 7:00 am – 3:30 pm

Office Phone: 812-238-7628

Evenings/Weekends: Dial “0”

Ask the operator to page the Chaplain’s Office.

Upcoming Events

February 6 – Ash Wednesday
Ashes will be distributed at 9am, 11am, 2pm, and 5pm.
Rev. Don Mullen will conduct a Protestant Service at Noon.

Quote of the Month

“The most curative thought in the world is the thought of love.” Ruth Stafford Peale quoting her husband Norman Vincent Peale

Editor’s Note

Contact Neva McFarland at the Chaplain’s Office for any comments or additions. 238-7628.

Primary Sacred Times for World Religions

February, 2008

1 – Lammass – Christian first fruits celebration observed by placing bread baked from first harvest on the altar. From the Celtic Christian tradition.

2 – Candlemas – Christian celebration of the presentation of young Jesus in the temple to the aged Simeon.

Imbolc – Wicca reflection on the power of the gods from which physical and spiritual harvest will come.

3 – Four Chaplains’ Sunday – Commemoration of the event in WWII when four Chaplains of Jewish and Christian traditions gave their life jackets to others as a troop ship sank in the Atlantic Ocean.

Transfiguration Sunday – Christian commemoration of the experience on the mountain when Jesus’ physical appearance became brilliant as his connection with traditional Jewish holy figures became evident to the disciples.

Setsubun Sai – Shinto celebration of the change of seasons with the coming of spring with shouts of “Devils out, Good Fortune in”. Bean throwing protects against demons.

5 – Shrove Tuesday – Christian carnival day on the eve of Ash Wednesday which begins Lent, a time of fasting and devotions. It is also known as Fat Tuesday in some places.

6 – Ash Wednesday – Christian observance to begin the 40 day season of Lent. Ashes are marked on worshippers as a sign of penitence.

7 – Chinese New Year – Begins a fifteen Day Festival for Chinese people of all religions. Family reunions with thanksgiving and remembrance of departed relatives take place. Traditionally a religious ceremony honors Heaven and Earth.

11 – Vasant Panchami – Hindu celebration dedicated to Saraswati, goddess of learning.

14 – St. Valentine’s Day – Christian celebration of the love of God presented in Jesus and in the lives of Christian believers. St. Valentine was a 3rd century martyr. This day is widely observed in the USA as a secular celebration of love.

15 – Nirvana Day – Buddhist observance of the death of the Buddha.

17 – Triodion – Orthodox Christian time period leading up to Lent.

26-March 1 – Intercalary Days – Baha’i insertion of days into the calendar in order to maintain their solar calendar.

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Union Hospital Chaplain's Office – making a difference in the Wabash Valley