

Bringing Christ to the Edges

The terrorist bombing is still fresh in our minds. How we grieve for the innocent people, including young people, who died or were severely injured in that senseless and brutal attack. Just as we were grappling with that news, we learned of the tragic explosion in West Texas and began thinking of and praying for the dead, the injured, and all those who lost loved ones and property. What sadness in the midst of Easter joy.

A few days ago, I was discussing these things with Msgr. Robert Weiss, the Pastor of St. Rose of Lima in Newtown (and a native Baltimorean). Msgr. Weiss told me that emotions continue to run high in that town following the attack on Sandy Hook Elementary School last December. Most of the media has departed. Now comes the hard part as parents and families try to piece their lives back together. Msgr. Weiss would never say so, but he and his parish are at the epicenter of those efforts to allow God's healing grace to take hold in the face of such terrible losses.

While praying for all these victims and others who had asked me to pray for them, I began to think about words which Pope Francis said shortly before his election. He said that whoever was elected needed to be completely reliant on the Lord and to lead a life marked by contemplation and adoration of the Lord, not only for his own spiritual well being but above all for the sake of the Church's mission of bringing Christ to the edges of the human experience - to suffering, to the loss of faith, to pain, to human weakness and sin, to death itself.

We naturally think of heroic priests like Msgr. Weiss who bring Christ for us in the toughest moments of our lives. But this is not solely their task. It is something all of us must do.

One way to continue giving thanks to Christ for dying and rising from the dead, is to bring his message of hope to someone we know who is suffering or isolated or on the brink of death. The more each of us does this the more our parishes become outward-looking evangelizing communities of faith, beacons of hope, and centers of love.