

He Spoke of Beauty and Sang of Love: A Tribute
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Life brings us experiences - some we want to tuck quietly away in our hearts and others we want to shout from the rooftops. A recent experience compelled me to want to do both.

Last week a tragic accident happened that involved the death in a car accident of a small child and her grandmother. I had the privilege of attending the memorial service this week and left feeling that, while I had come to extend support and sympathy, I left with a gift beyond anything I could have given.

About halfway through the service a young man spoke to us about beauty. He asked us, "How do you find the beauty" in those everyday encounters with one another, even the frustrating ones. Where is the beauty in a mother who insisted upon doing certain things her way (like the way she cut your hair) yet was also the one who cared for your basic life needs. who fed you and tucked you in at night? Where is the beauty in a small child who doesn't always want to cooperate, like in the grocery store check-out line when everyone behind you is beginning to wish they had chosen a different lane?

He gave other examples, then he sang to us a song of love. I had never heard the song, but I want to hear it again. The chorus included something like "what is life for? It's to love till you love it away." Simple lyrics - profound truth. It is the same song he sang only three years earlier at the child's christening. It was as if he understood that this passage we call death is not so unlike another kind of christening. Could it be that death is a further phase of life, lived out in another field of existence?

This young man told of he and his lovely wife reading a story at the funeral parlor to this young child and her grandmother. It was a story of a great teacher who lived nearly two thousand years ago. When this teacher knew his time to transition from life to death was near, a feast was held. His students, disciples, spoke of needing his presence in order to carry on how could they continue without him? He told them something that was quite profound. He told them that he would continue to be present inside of them. He even assured them that he would send a comforter to them that would remind them of his eternal presence.

In telling this story, the story of The Last Supper of Christ, this young man and woman realized that their loved ones, too, continue to live in their hearts.

The amazing thing to me was that the young man telling us these things and singing to us with a joyous light in his eyes was not the minister of the church or a close friend of the family. He is the father of the child and the son of the grandmother.

I had worried that the burden would be too much to bear for this young family. Yes, it will be difficult at times. There will be waves of sorrow still to come. There will be poignant moments that bring back tender memories. But there is no doubt in my mind that Christmas will come for this family. They know something that is easily forgotten in these millennial days - life is a continuum. There's beauty in that.