



This past Father's Day, our very own Fr. Dan Brandt, Director of the Chaplains unit, held an outdoor Mass at Gold Star Memorial Park in memory of our 562 fallen brothers and sisters whose names are inscribed on the wall. Also to honor the Gold Star Families and to reinforce our motto that their loved ones are "GONE BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN". Thanks to all who attended what a great crowd. But let me share with you a lesson that inspired me most. In back of the crowd stood a gentleman with his hat under his arm and hands together in front of him and head bowed. I did not recognize the gentleman so I walked over to him introduced myself, gave him a piece of candy and asked him what district he worked? He answered "oh, I don't work for CPD, I am a policeman from out of town and I heard about this service, so I came to show my support for my brothers and sisters". He made me choke up for a moment, I shook his hand and we hugged.

The words of the poet came alive, "I came to inspire and left inspired", "I came to give strength and left strengthened", "I came to give comfort and left comforted". It brought to mind that in life one of the most precious human gifts is to just be there. Let me share with you a story....

"Just Being There"

The Marine walked up to the nurse's station, and before he could say a word she said "glad you made it on time, let me show you the way".

The nurse took the tired, anxious serviceman to the patient's bedside.

"Your son is here," she said to the old man in bed.

She had to repeat the words several times before the patient's eyes opened.

Heavily sedated because of the pain of his heart attack, the old man dimly saw the young uniformed Marine standing outside the oxygen tent. He reached out his hand. The Marine wrapped his toughened fingers around the old man's limp ones, squeezing a message of love and encouragement.

The nurse brought a chair so that the Marine could sit beside the bed. All through the night the young Marine sat there in the poorly lighted ward, holding the old man's hand and offering him words of love and strength. He hummed some tunes of the past not even sure if the old man could hear him.

Occasionally, the nurse suggested that the Marine move away and rest awhile, go into the family lounge, but the Marine refused. Whenever the nurse came into the ward, the Marine was oblivious of her and of the night noises of the hospital – the clanking of the oxygen tank, the laughter of the night staff members exchanging greetings, the cries and moans of the other patients.

Now and then she heard him say a few gentle words. The dying man said nothing, only held tightly to his son's hand all through the night.

Along towards dawn, the old man passed away. The Marine released the now lifeless hand he had been holding and went to tell the nurse. While she did what she had to do, he waited.

Finally, she returned. She started to offer words of sympathy, but the Marine interrupted her.

"Who was that man?" he asked.

The nurse was startled, "He was your father," she answered.

"No, he wasn't," the Marine replied. "I never saw him before in my life."

"Then why didn't you say something when you came in before I took you to him?"

"I knew right away there had been a mistake, but I also knew he needed his son, and his son just wasn't here. When I realized that he was too sick to tell whether or not I was his son, knowing how much he needed me, I stayed. I came here tonight to find a Mr. William Grey. His son was killed in Iraq today, and I was sent to inform him. What was this Gentleman's Name?"

The Nurse with tears in her eyes answered, "Mr. William Grey....."

The moral of the story....The next time someone needs you ... just be there. Stay. Don't worry that you won't have the right words to say .Because in life, one of the most precious gifts and one of the most comforting that one person can give another is your presence. "JUST BE THERE". WE ARE NOT HUMAN BEINGS GOING THROUGH A TEMPORARY SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE, WE ARE SPIRITUAL BEINGS GOING THROUGH A TEMPORARY HUMAN EXPERIENCE.

On behalf of all the Chaplains, May G-d bless you and keep you safe. Should you wish company for a ride along or should have some good humor to share, don't hesitate to drop us a line.

Have a blessed, safe summer.

Compliments of your Police Chaplain

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