



“If Tomorrow Never Comes”

January 2019

On Monday December 17th 2018, the Chicago Police family lost two of our own in the line of duty. The lives of Police Officer Eduardo Marmolejo and Police Officer Conrad Gary ended suddenly and tragically. These Officers were young, energetic, and determined to make a difference in our city. They were honored and respected by their peers and were loved by all who knew them. They were never too busy to back you up on a call, share a smile, inquire about the well-being of others and share a good laugh. They touched the hearts of many. They made the ultimate sacrifice, doing what they swore to do, and in the blink of an eye, we lost two of our finest and bravest.

As I was standing on the railroad tracks, surrounded by dozens of Bosses, Officers, Support personnel, and members of the Chicago fire Department pondering on how in an instant our lives can change forever. It was dark and cold on the tracks. Some stood there weeping silently, some were making small talk, some still in shock from the recent loss of PO Samuel Jimenez, that they were too numb to say anything. Thinking to myself that this is one of those moments in life, where you feel like you were punched in the gut, and then when you catch your breath, you are punched again; there are no words to describe the pain, and your heart aches for those who just lost their loved ones.

I was thinking to myself - so where do we go from here? It brought to mind the following poem. Please let me share it with you.....

"If Tomorrow Never Comes".....

If I knew it would be the last time that I'd see you fall asleep,
I would tuck you in more tightly and pray the Lord, your soul to keep.
If I knew it would be the last time that I see you walk out the door,
I would give you a hug and kiss and call you back for one more.
If I knew it would be the last time I'd hear your voice lifted up in praise,
I would video tape each action and word, so I could play them back day after day.
If I knew it would be the last time, I could spare an extra minute or two to stop and say "I love you," instead of assuming you would KNOW I do.
If I knew it would be the last time I would be there to share your day,
well I'm sure you'll have so many more, so I can let just this one slip away.
For surely there's always tomorrow to make up for an oversight,
and we always get a second chance to make everything right.
There will always be another day to say our "I love you's",
And certainly there's another chance to say our "Anything I can do's?"
But just in case I might be wrong, and today is all I get,
I'd like to say how much I love you and I hope we never forget.
Tomorrow is not promised to anyone, young or old alike,
And today may be the last chance you get to hold your loved one tight.
So if you're waiting for tomorrow, why not do it today?
For if tomorrow never comes, you'll surely regret the day,

That you didn't take that extra time for a smile, a hug, or a kiss
and you were too busy to grant someone, what turned out to be their one last wish.
So hold your loved ones close today, whisper in their ear,
Tell them how much you love them and that you'll always hold them dear.
Take time to say "I'm sorry", "please forgive me," "thank you" or "it's okay".
And if tomorrow never comes, you'll have no regrets about today.

Nobody is guaranteed tomorrow. That is the message that we can learn from the sudden, tragic loss of P.O. Eduardo Marmolejo and P.O. Conrad Gary. Take a few moments, reach out and share a hug, a kind word with a fellow officer, a loved one or a family member. Share a smile and a laugh with someone who's burden is heavier than yours, because that's what our heroes' would have done. So If tomorrow never comes, the kindness you did today, the good feeling you brought to the heart of another, will be remembered for eternity.

One more short story, to help keep our thoughts in the proper perspective...

A new minister was walking with an older, more seasoned minister in the garden one day. Feeling a bit insecure about what G-d had for him to do, he was asking the older preacher for some advice. The older preacher walked up to a rosebush and handed the young preacher a rosebud and told him to open it without tearing off any of the petals. The young preacher looked in disbelief at the older preacher and was trying to figure out what a rosebud could possibly have to do with his wanting to know the will of G-d for his life and ministry. But, because of his great respect for the older preacher, he proceeded to try to unfold the rose, while keeping every petal intact. It wasn't long before he realized how impossible this was to do. Noticing the younger preacher's inability to unfold the rosebud, without tearing it, the older preacher began to recite the following poem... "The Rosebud"

It is only a tiny rosebud, a flower of G-d's design;
But I cannot unfold the petals, with these clumsy hands of mine.
The secret of unfolding flowers, is not known to such as I.
G-D opens this flower so easily, but in my hands they die.
If I cannot unfold a rosebud, this flower of G-d's design,
Then how can I have the wisdom, to unfold this life of mine?
So, I'll trust in G-d for leading, each moment of my day.
I will look to G-d for guidance, in each step along the way.
The path that lies before me, only my Lord and my Guide knows.
I'll trust G-d to unfold the moments, just as He unfolds the rose.

On a side note, on behalf of ALL the Chaplains, a very special thank you and pat on the back to each and every one of you, Police and Fire personnel, who stayed at the scene through the night, came to the ME's office, the wake and funeral service, to show your support and give comfort to the families of these two heroes. Because sometimes in life there are no words to ease the pain and nothing we can do to change the circumstances, just 'being there', just your presence provides comfort and speaks

volumes. There you stood on the tracks, at the District and at the funeral services lining the hallways, lost in thought, broken hearted with tears streaming down the faces of many, no words spoken, no words needed to be spoken, you were "just there" , your presence meant more than words can say.

THANK YOU and G-D BLESS YOU.

Best wishes to you and your loved ones for a very Happy New Year. May 2019 be a year filled with joy, happiness and good health.

Should you ever need a shoulder to lean on, an ear to listen or perhaps you have a good story to share; don't hesitate to give us a call.

Compliments of your Police Chaplain

Rabbi Moshe Wolf

773-463-4780 or email: moshewolf@hotmail.com