

EASTER IS COMING

Life is so Fragile

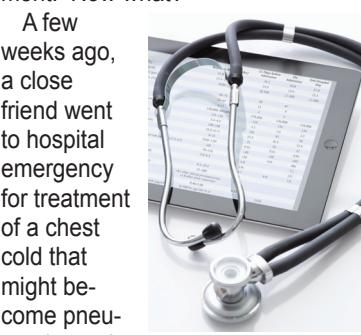
On a recent Saturday night, at about 1AM (ok, it was Sunday morning) I was awakened from a sound sleep by lights in the living room and the sound of voices. I thought that someone must be having nightmare, and as it turns out, someone was, but not the someone I imagined.

"Our trees are on fire!" they told me. What?!? Then they pointed toward a bright orange glow on the



northwest edge of our property, where we don't have any trees left. Oh! It's the trailer that the neighbors keep for their caretaker, totally engulfed in flames. A woman, her grandchild, and some dogs and birds live there. How are they? Did they get out ok? It turns out that thankfully, the woman and child and one dog got out, but the rest died in the fire.

Can you imagine how you would feel if your life was turned upside down so suddenly? Maybe, if you have been through devastation like that. All of your reference points of your daily life are gone in a moment. The comfort of your possessions, no matter how few; the wallpaper of your awareness; the context of living; gone, in a moment. Now what?



A few weeks ago, a close friend went to hospital emergency for treatment of a chest cold that might become pneumonia, and since this person is also asthmatic, such a thing can be serious. His symptoms were easily dealt with, but in the process of doing x-rays, the doctors discovered a cancerous tumor in his kidney. A few days ago, another close friend had to have a biopsy done, and was told that the results pointed to cancer. Wow! Talk about turning your life upside down. In these cases, the material possessions and context

remain intact, but the emotional and spiritual fabric of one's awareness is shaken to the core.

How does one respond to such earth-shattering situations in life? What is the woman who lost her home, possessions, and loving animal relationships thinking right now? Where does she find solace for her loss of her life as she knew it? And the two cancer patients – how do they handle the sudden news of the possibility of the agony of therapy and the specter of death sooner than anticipated?

On the night of the fire, the four of us who live in our house walked north on our tree(less) line to watch the firemen do their thing. Bless them, even when all they can do is preside over the destruction of the structure. We watched the fire trucks trundle up Highland to Clark and into the property the slow way. I jumped up and down in my mind: why don't they come over on Furst and come in the short way??? Oh, well, it was too late anyway.

We went back to bed, and understandably, it was difficult to get back to sleep. I lay there thinking how fragile life is. How so much of my peace of mind depends on these material things being in place. How I go to work at the store, where things are generally "normal"; I go home to a routine evening with the doggies at my side; I sleep in my warm bed. If this gets interrupted, my peace of mind can be shattered and my life changed radically. This can happen in a moment. Think of the earthquakes in 1992 – Landers and Big Bear – when we were literally bounced out of bed at 5AM on a Sunday morning, with objects falling down all around us, and the store a mess of broken glass and items thrown all around. It took less than 5 minutes to destroy our comfortable routine and change our course for that day and many thereafter.

So what does this have to do with Easter? Everything, if we will open our eyes and see. Easter is a vivid reminder to us that our faith in these temporal things, in our earthly lives and circumstances, is misplaced and will ultimately let us down. It will all perish when we do. Even our achievements on this earth will perish in time, or even worse, others will distort

what we stood for.

We KNOW in our heart of hearts that there is more to our lives and existence than what we can see and feel on this earth. We KNOW a sense of longing for the Good, for the Perfect, for the chance to live in harmony and joy instead of frustration and pain. We KNOW that our values are but a shadow of Something or Someone much greater than ourselves, Who is out



there and hard to understand, but Who IS out there.

So what does Easter tell us? That the Someone, God Himself, has reached out to us to fulfill our longings and to reassure us that He is there and that He cares for each one of us. Easter shows us how He even became human in the person of Jesus Christ to tell us directly, and show us by His earthly life, how we should live ours. Easter demonstrates in spades how much Evil there is in this world, Evil that killed even God Himself, as it would kill us and any attempt we make to become one of God's people rather than slaves of that Evil.

And the best thing of all: Easter shows us that Evil didn't win and was unable to kill Jesus Christ after all. Evil will also be unable to kill our spirits if we take refuge with God, Whom we now know better through the example and Spirit of Jesus Christ.

When we do that, the shallow stuff, the material stuff, fades in importance and we have strength to deal with the bad things that happen. We can't explain these things, or understand them, nor do we have to, even as Evil taunts us that we must explain and understand or look like fools.

No, all that is required of us is to place ourselves in the hands of our Father, Who will satisfy our longings and give us Life, if we can hold on to Him through this one. And He will even give us strength to do that!

Hallelujah! Thank You, Father!

Thank You for showing us that death in this life doesn't have to end our lives, if we trust in You.

Linda Gommel

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Contributed. From the Web.

OLDTIMERS

A couple in their nineties are both having problems remembering things.



They decide to go to the doctor for a checkup. The doctor tells them that they're physically okay, but they might want to start writing things down to help them remember.

Later that night while watching TV, the old man gets up from his chair.

His wife asks, "Where are you going?"

"To the kitchen," he replies.

"Will you get me a bowl of ice cream?"

"Sure."

"Don't you think you should write it down so you can remember it?" she asks.

"No, I can remember it."

"Well, I'd like some strawberries on top, too. You'd better write it down, because you know you'll forget it."

He says, "I can remember that! You want a bowl of ice cream with strawberries."

"I'd also like whipped cream. I'm certain you'll forget that, so you'd better write it down!" she retorts.

Irritated, he says, "I don't need to write it down, I can remember it! Leave me alone! Ice cream with strawberries and whipped cream -- I got it, for goodness sake!" Then he grumbles into the kitchen.

After about 20 minutes the old man returns from the kitchen and hands his wife a plate of bacon and eggs.

She stares at the plate for a moment and says, "Where's my toast?

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

L.V. School Board Meeting

Thursday, April 13, starts at 5:30PM. At the Alternative Education Center, 8560 Aliento Rd up Highway 18.

Mark your calendar!

L.V. Mega Swap Meet Saturday, May 6, 8AM to 3PM. Sellers at 8 different locations in Lucerne Valley. We'll have 10 sellers here at the store (all spaces here are filled).

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Rancho Drugs – Tues. 11AM, Wed. & Fri. 3PM

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Please, unless otherwise indicated, ON AD ITEMS NO MORE THAN 6 TOTAL (including all flavors or varieties) OF ANY ITEM, PER FAMILY, DURING THE AD PERIOD, AT THE SALE PRICE, except in produce and meat, which are limited to normal retail quantities, or which carry limits specifically stated. Sorry, we must reserve the right to further limit or refuse sales.

ON MULTIPLE PRICING, when purchasing items in quantities more or less than the multiple stated, the register is built automatically to charge the "each" price times the quantity. (Example: Price of item is \$3/1. The price of: one = 34¢, two = 68¢, three = \$1, four = \$1.34, five = \$1.68, six = \$2.00).

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