Office of the Vice President for Mission

TO: The Gonzaga Community
FROM: Frank E. Case, S.J. and Shanea Giroux
SUBJ: Moment for Mission
DATE: April 3, 2012

Please note: If you are seeking space for quiet reflection, you may use the Student Chapel on the third floor of College Hall or the Jesuit House Chapel within Jesuit House. The Student Chapel is available during the day with a 12 noon mass each weekday and 9:00 p.m. mass Monday through Thursday when classes are in session. The Jesuit House Chapel is open daily with the exception of 11:30 to 12:15 p.m. and Wednesday’s after 5 p.m.

Holy Week

Several years ago, when working out of Spokane’s House of Charity on Main Ave., I would occasionally ask the men who dropped in off the streets whether they prayed (or whether they ever talked to God). Their universal response was, “Sure, Father, all the time. In my situation, God is all I’ve got.” That’s quite a message for Holy Week. God is all we’ve got.

In Jesus’ passion, death, and resurrection God enters fully into our frail humanity, being one with us in our moments of deepest need, partaking with us in our sufferings and in our suffering world. The Word became flesh, living flesh, as close to us as our dearest friends and family, intimately sharing in our humanness. We pray; we talk to God. But there are times when words just don’t come. At such times there is not much more we can do other than to recognize God’s presence and let God’s love enter into our hearts. Jesus’s experience of suffering and death somehow, mysteriously, tells us that it is alright for us to experience the effects of our own suffering – the sense of human futility, of abandonment, of asking why?, how can it be?, where is the meaning in all of this?

Jesus’ passion assures us that even in these dark moments God is with us, “God is all we’ve got”. And because we’ve got God, we never lose the glimmer of life; and that’s what the resurrection is about. The glorious life of Jesus after his resurrection reaches back into the realities of our human existence. Life and dying are inextricably intertwined in the mystery of our relationship with God. And Holy Week can become for us the stage on which this mystery is acted out. Enter in, watch, listen and before long you will see and hear! God is all we’ve got.

Apropos of this you might enjoy the reflection “Footprints in the Sand”.

One night I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord. Many scenes from my life flashed across the sky. In each scene I noticed footprints in the sand. Sometimes there were two sets of footprints, other times there was only one. This bothered me because I noticed that during the low periods of my life, when I was suffering from anguish, sorrow or defeat, I could see only one set of footprints, so I said to the Lord, “You promised me Lord, that if I followed you, you would walk with me always. But I have noticed that during the most trying periods of my life there has only been one set of footprints in the sand. Why, when I needed you most, have you not been there for me?” The Lord replied, “The years when you have seen only one set of footprints, my child, is when I carried you.”