

EASTER SUNDAY - APRIL 16, 2017

HAPPY EASTER!

IN THE CHRISTIAN WORLD HOLY WEEK BEGAN LAST SUNDAY - PALM SUNDAY...

IN THE GOLFING WORLD LAST SUNDAY WAS THE FINAL ROUND OF THE MASTERS IN AUGUSTA, GA. -

CROWNING OF THE 1917 MASTERS CHAMPION - SERGIO GARCIA

WHAT BETTER WAY TO BEGIN AN EASTER HOMILY THAN SOME

REFLECTIONS ON SERGIO GARCIA - THE WINNER OF THIS YEAR'S

MASTERS - RIGHT - GOOD OLD SI COMES THROUGH AGAIN!

I HAD A SEMINARY COURSE - THREE SOURCES FOR A GOOD HOMILY SACRED SCRIPTURE, TRADITION AND SPORTS ILLUSTRATED

ADMITTEDLY, FOR SOME THIS MAY BE A STRETCH - BUT TRY TO STAY WITH ME....

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SERGIO GARCIA IS THAT HE IS 37 YRS OLD...

HE PLAYED IN 73 MAJOR GOLF TOURNAMENTS BEFORE FINALLY

WINNING ONE - THAT IS THE LONGEST STREAK EVER...

THERE ARE FOUR MAJOR TOURNAMENTS IN GOLF, THE MASTERS, THE BRITISH OPEN, THE PGA TOURNAMENT AND THE US. OPEN....

OF COURSE, THEY ARE MAJOR BECAUSE THEY PAY THE MOST MONEY -

I THINK - AND HAVE BEEN PLAYED THE LONGEST...

I THINK THE MASTERS TOURNAMENT HAS BECOME SO SPECIAL BECAUSE

IT IS THE ONLY ONE THAT IS PLAYED AT THE SAME GOLF COURSE EVERY

YEAR - SINCE THE 1930'S AT AUGUSTA, GA.. - SPRING RITUAL

*SERGIO CAME VERY CLOSE A NUMBER OF TIMES TO WINNING A MAJOR
E.G. WHEN HE WAS ONLY 19 HE LOST BY ONE SHOT TO TIGER WOODS -
AND AT THAT TIME EVERYONE THOUGHT HE WOULD WAS TIGER'S
GREATEST RIVAL*

*SERGIO'S TRANSFORMATION FROM 19 TO A 37 YR. OLD MASTERS
CHAMPION IS MY FOCUS - HIS GROWTH , HIS MATURITY*

HOW DID THAT HAPPEN?

*AND DOES IT HAVE ANY RELEVANCE TO OUR JOURNEY FROM PALM
SUNDAY TO EASTER SUNDAY?*

OBVIOUSLY, I THINK IT DOES...

*EARLY ON SERGIO WOULD REACT TO SETBACKS WITH PETULANCE - ALL
UPSET - FLIPPING OFF HOSTILE CROWDS AND ONCE SPITTING INTO A
TROPHY CUP IN DISGUST..,*

*ALONG THE WAY YOU ALSO NEED TO KNOW THAT, ACCORDING TO SI,
"HE GOT DUMPED BY GREG NORMAN'S DAUGHTER, MORGAN-LEIGH,
WHOM GARCIA SAID WAS THE FIRST WOMAN HE HAD EVER LOVED"
THAT'S ADVERSITY - THAT'S PAIN, THAT'S SUFFERING -*

THAT'S GOOD FRIDAY....THAT'S A CRUCIFIXION

*YOU ALSO NEED TO KNOW THAT HE HAS FALLEN IN LOVE AGAIN AND IS
PLANNING ON A WEDDING IN THE SUMMER....*

*NO DOUBT THAT HELPED HIM COME TO THIS YEAR'S MASTERS WITH A
CHANGED ATTITUDE...LOVE DOES WONDERS*

BUT ALSO WITH 18 YRS OF MATURING

*AND A VERY DIFFERENT APPROACH TO ADVERSITY, TO SUFFERING
SO ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE MASTERS, EVEN THOUGH THERE WERE 40
MPH WINDS WREAKING HAVOC HE DID NOT LET THE AUGUSTA
NATIONAL COURSE GET INTO HIS HEAD BY*

"TRYING TO FIGHT AGAINST SOMETHING YOU CAN'T FIGHT" -

INSTEAD HE ACCEPTED THE VAGARIES OF THE WIND - -

*ACCEPTING, EMBRACING ADVERSITY AND SUFFERING, WHAT YOU
CANNOT CHANGE - THAT IS NO SMALL FEAT, IS IT?*

IT'S CALLED DYING TO OUR SELF - IN SPIRITUAL LANGUAGE

*AFTER THE ROUND GARCIA CREDITED NOT HIS SWING - BUT A VASTLY
IMPROVED ATTITUDE:*

*"I THINK I'M A LITTLE BIT CALMER NOW. I'M WORKING ON TRYING TO
ACCEPT THINGS. IT'S NOT EASY, BUT THAT IS THE CHALLENGE WE
ALWAYS HAVE."*

*WELL SAID - ISN'T THAT THE CHALLENGE WE ALL HAVE - TRYING TO
ACCEPT THINGS - DIFFICULT THINGS - WE CANNOT CHANGE - -*

DYING TO OURSELF

*WHAT IN YOUR LIFE ARE YOU HAVING DIFFICULTY ACCEPTING RIGHT
NOW?*

*SOMETHING YOU CANNOT CHANGE, SOMETHING OUT OF YOUR
CONTROL....BUT YOU'RE TRYING TO CONTROL IT*

*PERHAPS IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR SPOUSE, WITH YOUR
CHILD...PERHAPS AT WORK OR AT SCHOOL*

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THAT IS YOUR GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE, YOUR CRUCIFIXION....

REMEMBER JESUS IN THE GARDEN....

"FATHER, IF IT IS POSSIBLE, LET THIS CUP PASS FROM ME; YET NOT AS I WILL, BUT AS YOU WILL"

THERE YOU HAVE THE FULL HUMANITY OF JESUS ON DISPLAY....

"IF IT IS POSSIBLE, LET THIS CUP PASS FROM ME" -

HE WANTS TO AVOID GOOD FRIDAY, IF POSSIBLE

THAT WOULD BE GOOD FOR HIM BUT NOT FOR US...

SERGIO'S GROWTH SHOWED UP ALSO ON THE 13TH HOLE OF SUNDAY'S

FINAL ROUND - HE MESSED UP BADLY BUT RECOVERED FOR A PAR

LATER HE ADMITTED "IN THE PAST HE WOULD HAVE WALLOWED IN

SELF-PITY. THIS TIME HE TOLD HIMSELF, "IF THAT'S WHAT'S SUPPOSE

TO HAPPEN, LET IT HAPPEN. LET'S TRY TO MAKE A GREAT 5 AND SEE IF

WE CAN PUT ON A HELLUVA FINISH TO HAVE A CHANCE" -

WHICH HE DID...

THE STRUGGLE TO ACCEPT LIFE WHEN IT IS NOT GOING OUR WAY, THE

STRUGGLE TO EMBRACE SETBACKS, THE STRUGGLE TO EMBRACE A

SITUATION IN WHICH WE ARE NOT IN CONTROL.....

TO EMBRACE THE CROSS...

WHEN WE HAVE TO GIVE UP CONTROL, LET GO....

"YET, NOT AS I WILL, BUT AS YOU WILL."

FACING ADVERSITY, FACING PAINFUL SITUATIONS OVER WHICH WE

HAVE NO CONTROL.....

***BUT WE ARE WILLING TO LET GO - IN TRUST - WITH CONFIDENCE IN A
LOVING GOD - AS OUR FATHER, OUR MOTHER***

CATHY DEMPSEY SPOKE SO WELL ABOUT THIS ON GOOD FRIDAY

***WHAT I WANT TO EMPHASIZE HERE IS THAT HOLY THURSDAY NIGHT IN
THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANCE, AS WELL AS GOOD FRIDAY ON THE
CROSS IS ONE SIDE OF THE COIN OF OUR LIFE AND EASTER SUNDAY IS
THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT SAME COIN...***

IT IS NOT ONLY TRUE FOR JESUS - IT IS ALSO TRUE FOR EACH OF US...

THAT IS WHY HE WENT BEFORE US IN HIS HUMANITY

THAT HAS BEEN MY NEW REALIZATION THIS HOLY WEEK...

***THEY GO TOGETHER - LIKE A HORSE AND CARRIAGE, LIKE LOVE AND
MARRIAGE...***

***GOOD FRIDAY AND EASTER SUNDAY - TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN
THAT IS OUR LIFE***

***WHEN WE APPROACH OUR GOOD FRIDAYS, OUR CRUCIFIXIONS, THE WAY
JESUS DID FOR US WITH LOVE, WITH A WILLINGNESS TO "LET GO", WITH
A WILLINGNESS TO GO DOWN, IF YOU WILL, AND EMBRACE THEM -
NOT BLAME SOMEBODY ELSE, NOT SSTRIKE OUT AT SOMEONE ELSE IN
RETALIATION OR VENGEANCE***

***WE WILL EVENTUALLY EXPERIENCE SOMETHING OF EASTER SUNDAY,
SOMETHING OF THE RESURRECTION IN OUR OWN LIVES RIGHT NOW...***

RIGHT NOW....IN THIS LIFE

***ALREADY IN THIS LIFE, AS A FORETASTE OUR RESURRECTED LIFE IN
ETERNITY...***

THAT IS THE PASCHAL MYSTERY PLAYED OUT IN OUR LIVES...

***WHEN WE MOVE TOWARD ACCEPTING OUR GOOD FRIDAYS, OUR
CRUCIFIXIONS IN THE WAY JESUS ACCEPTED HIS WE WILL
EXPERIENCE A TRANSFORMED HEART AND A NEW CONSCIOUSNESS, A
NEW RESURRECTED AWARENESS...NEW ENERGY***

I PROMISE YOU.....

***WHEN WE JOURNEY WITH JESUS AND "EMPTY OURSELVES", LET GO, GO
DOWN, DESCEND INTO THE PAIN OF OUR GOOD FRIDAYS AND OUR
CRUCIFIXIONS WE WILL EVENTUALLY RISE UP ON OUR EASTER SUNDAY***

***I CANNOT PROMISE YOU A GREEN JACKET BUT SOMETHING GREATER,
YOU WILL HAVE A NEW EXPANDED LOVING HEART AND A NEW
AWARENESS...***

A NEW VITALITY, A NEW OUTLOOK ON LIFE

WE USE A SOPHISTICATED TERM TO DESCRIBE THE PROCESS -

THE PASCHAL MYSTERY

***BUT IT IS ALSO MEANT TO DESCRIBE THE DYINGS AND THE RISINGS OF
A LIFE WELL LIVED WITH COURAGE, LOVE AND OPENNESS***

LET US PRAY FOR THAT IN OUR LIVES....HAPPY EASTER!