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Rescue from the Mud

By Elise L Moore CSB

Where else but New York City would 150 men and an entire city's resources work unendingly with dogged determination until a construction worker trapped in mud was rescued...alive. The story in March 21, 2013 edition of the New York Times brought tears to my eyes. Failure was simply not an option. Whatever it took, the rescuers were going to save that man.

Perhaps it was more than human effort. Perhaps men were praying for strength, for guidance, for divine intervention. Perhaps human effort was underpinned by moral and spiritual qualities like compassion, courage, ingenuity, spiritual power. A man was rescued and everyone present played an important role.

Today I'm drawing an analogy to saving our sisters and brothers from sin and sickness. We might not be in the same hole or stuck in the same mud. However, aren't we all united in working as men and women of God praying for the safety and health of humankind? Our employer is God. The tools of this trade are prayer, spiritual conviction, and compassion. Those who accept this job along with their "day" job can respond to calls for help and pray effectively and compassionately.

We might not hear of every worker stuck in the mud or in some personal hell, but those whose calls we do hear, shouldn't we rush to the rescue? This might mean physically, if we are on the spot, as a chaplain friend of mine was on the spot when a plane hit the Pentagon on 9/11. Or it might mean mentally, that we respond with courage, conviction, and spiritual ingenuity to pray for those in need. No one need ask us to pray. When there is an emergency, it is our human and divine obligation to affirm God's presence, God's power, God's ability to save and protect in the midst of disaster.

My grandmother was awakened in the night feeling that her son was in danger during World War II. She stayed up much of the night praying. She affirmed that God was present everywhere, wherever he was. She prayed

for his safety, that he have wisdom. She prayed until she felt a sense of peace and felt that he was out of danger. Weeks later, she received a letter from her son briefly describing an extremely hazardous situation on that date at that time, and how he was kept safe and survived. My uncle was awarded several medals for valor as a result of his combat experiences. He believed his safety was due to God and the prayers of his mother, himself and others.

Not that only those who are prayed for can experience safety and rescue. God is always present, all powerful in every situation. But those who pray are tuning to the divine and hearing the idea that will guide, heal and save. Obeying those ideas and putting them into practice is the human action governed by the divine. It's the divine shining through the human.

The Bible says, “And the **prayer** of faith shall **save** the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.” (James 5:15)

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