

# Never Giving Up: Dimensions Of Human Resilience:

By Samuel F. Mikail, PhD., C. Psych., ABPP

The recent death of Nelson Mandela served as an opportunity for many to reflect on the strength of the human spirit.

Mandela dedicated much of his adult life to ensuring that all South Africans were granted equal rights and privileges in the eyes of the state. His mission came at great cost. Mandela

endured countless experiences of physical and emotional violence. Even before Mandela's 27 years of imprisonment his freedom of movement and speech were curtailed in unimaginable ways. At one point Mandela was banned from any form of public assembly and not permitted to speak to more than one person at a time; a dictate that prohibited him from attending his son's birthday party. And yet, the world witnessed Mandela's unfathomable capacity for forgiveness after his release from Robin Island. How can any human, after enduring such restrictions, beatings, hard labor, and deprivation forgive his oppressors? To emerge physically intact after 27 years of such harsh treatment is a sign of hardiness. But the willingness to forgive and embrace one's oppressors is something entirely different. The life of Nelson Mandela reflects the essence of human resilience, an approach to life captured in words that Mandela himself spoke when he said; "Do not judge me by my successes; judge me by how many times I fell and got back up again."



There are no shortages of examples of human resilience. But how does resilience come to be? Is it an inherent trait, a cultural norm, a learned behavior, or some combination of these things? Resilience is a construct that is equally relevant to individuals and communities. It is a dynamic characteristic that builds on an individual's or group's resources. To be strengthened it must be nurtured through intentional effort....Always choose life and live.

January 27 2015, marked the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz/ Birkenau Death Camps. Many survivors and their families attended this event; it was a very fine setting of many examples of triumph of human resilience, as well as of the human spirit with their words which must become a part of our own spiritual fiber.

*Resilience*

Martin Greenfield recounts amid his tears of strength as he was being separated from his father at the ramp upon arriving in Auschwitz. He tells us that his father had a strong feeling that they would never see each other again. Hugging his son's shoulders he said "Son, your mother and I have raised you the best we can to be always strong and should we not survive this death camp, Honor us, by living-not by crying, nor looking back, always choosing to go forward,....And so I have."

Renee Firestone, another survivor of the camps, did as Mandela did. Renee forgave her oppressors and saying "that by doing so she said she would not stoop to their level letting them win." She set herself truly free through forgiveness. She also said; "As long as my mind keeps working and I can speak, I will tell this story."



**As We Very Shortly Head Into the  
40 days of Ashes to Easter.....**

**February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**The “Ups” of Lent: More than  
Just “Giving Up”**

**By Msgr. Richard Hilgartner**

**Director of the Secretariat for Divine Worship of the U.S.  
Conference of Catholic Bishops.**

“So what are you giving up for Lent?” That’s a popular question among Catholics as Lent approaches. This is good, because part of the “discipline of Lent” is sacrifice. But what is the point of it? But if the only purpose of sacrifice—of “giving up” something—is to be able to say you’re doing something for Lent, or if that sacrifice is merely about self-improvement, we’ve missed the point.

Lenten sacrifice involves of a three-pronged approach to this time of spiritual renewal: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, or to put it more succinctly: lifting up, giving up, and taking up... the “ups” of Lent. It’s only when we pursue all three that the real renewal intended in Lent can happen.

In prayer, we “lift up” our hearts to the Lord. We express praise and gratitude, we present our needs, and open our heart as we surrender to God’s will and power to save. This is important in Lent where we strive to set our relationship with God aright. Prayer helps us do that by keeping open communication with God—we talk to God and we await and listen to God’s response. As we present our needs we recognize our dependence on God and grow in our trust in his promise to provide for what we really need.

In fasting, we “give up” what we don’t really need in the first place. Sometimes that feels like the most difficult part of all, and if the “giving up” isn’t replaced by something more fruitful, then it might be just a hardship for the sake of the hardship, or it might be replaced by something equally meaningless. For example, if I give up chocolate, only to replace it by eating ice cream, then there is no real benefit. Or if I give up or cut back on watching television, but replace it with video games or time online, then to what end am I really giving something up?

It’s the third “up”— “taking up”—that makes the giving up work. We “take up” works of charity (almsgiving) in order to walk more clearly the path of service and love the Lord calls us to walk. In this regard, we remove the excess by “giving up” in order to engage in what we are really called to do. So perhaps I might give up or cut back on watching television, in order to make time to be present to someone in need, to dedicate some time to study, reflection or prayer.

The journey of Lent lets us walk more closely with Jesus, who desires our presence, sometimes more than we desire his. May our “lifting up,” “giving up,” and “taking up” lead us to get more “caught up” in the love of God through his Son’s Cross and Resurrection.

# Our Ellen Welke Fund needs to be replenished

Our Island community has benefitted greatly for those who are seriously ill and are in need of frequent flights for medical appointments. We are grateful to Paul and Angel Welke for making this ministry possible. Please help us to fill up these very necessary funds.

Your IRS letters have been reworked and will either be mailed or given to you. I am grateful to Mark Pearson's secretarial work in completing this work for the 2014 tax year.

## January Stewardship Offerings

04 January: Envelope Checks & Cash: \$655.00, Loose Checks & Cash:\$131.00. Total Collection: \$786.00

11 January: Envelope Checks & Cash: \$528.00, Loose Checks & Cash: \$82.00. Total Collection: \$610.00

18 January: Envelope Checks & Cash: \$389.00, Loose Checks & Cash: \$558.00. Total Collection: \$947.00

25 January: Envelope Checks & Cash: \$650.00, Loose Checks & Cash: \$231.00. Total Collection: \$881.00

Total for the month of January 2015: \$3224.00

We encourage you to use the weekly envelopes with your personal number; this way we can have an accurate accounting of your donations for the coming tax year.

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## February Mass Intentions:

930am Sunday 01 February: Kay McElwain, req. Family. Blessing of candles.

900am Tuesday 03 February: Tina Walker, req. Gary and Tina Morgan

900am Thursday 05 February: Mary Bonner Antrim, req. Family

930am Sunday 08 February: Byron Loy Groesbek, Father of Rob Groesbek

900am Tuesday 10 February: Russell and Joy Green, req. Kevin Green

900am Thursday 12 February: Sr. Eileen Doherty, req. Father Jim Doherty

930am Sunday 15 February: Patrick and Elizabeth LaFreniere & Family, req. Jean LaFreniere

900am Tuesday 17 February: Russell and Joy Green, req. Kevin Green

700am Wednesday 18 February Ash Wednesday: Intentions of the Parish

900am Thursday 19 February: Patrick and Elizabeth LaFreniere

930am Sunday 22 February First Sunday of Lent: Russell and Joy Green, req. Kevin Green

900am Tuesday 24 February: John Eustice req. Father Jim Doherty

900am Thursday 26 February: Janet O'Donnell req. Family