

Celebration of the Life of Javier Moran  
April 30, 2016

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Romans 8:35, 37-39; Mark 10:13-16

Welcome, dear ones. This packed church is a wonderful tribute to the Moran family. Thank you for coming.

Different ones of us knew Javi in different ways: as a son, a brother, a grandson, a nephew, a neighbor, a playmate.

Javi was a child of this parish, a beloved member of my flock. He came to church before he was born--borne by his mother throughout her pregnancy. His first actual appearance was the first Sunday of his life. Renee and Ricardo always come to church. When they saw my surprise at their bringing him so soon, laughingly they said "He's the third!" I suspect that on a percentage basis, Javi's attendance record will be unsurpassed. And I'm fairly sure he was the youngest person ever to grace the pulpit for a pledge-campaign speech: he was 5 months old!

As his priest, I blessed him in baptism, and in his parting.

Death is a mystery. And when anybody dies before their time we are left to wonder as we wander in grief. We have so many questions. I want to talk about a couple of those questions today.

The first question is the hardest: **why?** Why did Javi die? I wish I knew the answer. But I don't. Nobody really knows why bad things happen to good people, or why innocent people die when they are young.

Jesus died senselessly, cruelly, before his time

Javi died senselessly, accidentally, way before his time

We do not know why.

That brings up the next question: where have they gone? What happens next?

We really don't know for sure; but we have some hints, some ideas, based on what happened to Jesus.

After Jesus died, he came back to life in a mysterious way. He was physically present for a while. He appeared to his friends at different times: when they were together in the Upper Room, when they were fishing, when they were walking on the road to Emmaus. He was showing them that death wasn't the end--that his soul, his spirit, lived on after the body was gone, and that theirs and ours could, too.

Though Javi is no longer standing here, **his spirit is alive** in the hearts of his parents and sisters, of Emily, his grandparents and so many, many friends; and in my own. Javi's spirit is alive in this place, in this church, in our Parish Hall on Wednesday nights, in the hearts of our community,

Another question we often ask: where was God in this tragic time? If we can't see God, how would we know?

I don't know why Javi died, and I've only got an inkling about where he is. But I do know this:

God is love, and wherever love is, God is there.

Love has many forms. Sometimes love is action. Sometimes, love is quiet companionship, patient waiting. Sometimes love is laughter, sometimes tears. Always, God's love is generous, whole-hearted, open handed.

By that definition, God has been **everywhere** from the moment of Javi's accident: in Emily's response, in the ambulance, in the ERs.

God's love was all over the 5th floor of Children's Hospital--particularly in and around Javi's room.

God was there in the gentle attendance of the doctors and nurses, the chaplain and others.

God was in the friends and family who cared for Marcella and Marisol, who waited with Renee and Ricardo.

God was in those who prayed--everywhere.

God's whole-hearted, open-handed, boundlessly generous love was in Renee and Ricardo's decision to have Javi's death bring life to others.

God was in the Operating Room where Javi made that gift exactly a week ago.

And God has been with the family and with us all ever since.

God is here, now, in the love we have come to share with Renee and Ricardo.

Awareness of that love is one of the many gifts that Javi's passing gave to us.

We at St. John's have been talking about Javi's gifts for the last ten days. It began in the hospital, when Sara Logan told Javi that we all knew he had many gifts to give to the world; we just didn't know how soon it would be.

The gifts from Javi's healthy body saved three people's lives. His strong heart beats in the body of a one-year old boy. Imagine that!

Javi gave us the pure memory of a boy who was joyful, curious, brave and loving. Forever that's who Javi will be: a golden child who was conceived in love and lived surrounded by love--from his first day to his last.

The truth is that we're still discovering Javi's gifts as we remember him. On Wednesday night, Sonia Toomey said "Javi's gift to us was realizing how much this community means to us, how much we need one another, how much we love one another."

And so we celebrate the life of Javi Moran--a life as beautiful as life can be, a life whose blessings to his family, his friends, his church, his community continue to unfold.

Thanks be to God.