

An Update From Fr. Rick Frechette, C.P. on the Anniversary of the Haiti Earthquake.

Dear Friends

Today when I got up at 5 am, I deliberately put on all black clothes,
after a disturbed sleep last night where several times i was awakened by thousands of voices wailing and
moaning
which i knew were not really there.
A long hard day lay ahead.

It helped me, when I came down for coffee, to pray the Liturgy of the Hours for the Dead (I hope it helped them
too!)

For this first anniversary of our terrible natural disaster
(which was not a Divine retribution),
I participated in four masses.
One at the place of the dead, for the dead.
One at the fallen Cathedral with the bishops and priests and people,
One at our own hospital for our own dead,
and one at the Sacred Heart Parish for their dead.

If today we were only to remember the horror of the earthquake,
none of us would have been able to get out of bed
from being heavy with sadness

We would hardly have needed a special day to remember the earthquake.
It is in our face every day.
The broken buildings, the ragged tents, the hungry and homeless poor.

But today we remember so much more
and we remember in a different way.
Instead of our private daily experiences of an earthquake ravaged country and people
we remember it together
we see and speak our sadness
in order to hold each other up with arms and with hope
to not allow anyone to fall
in a chain of friendship and solidarity

and we remember deeper and wider things
We remember that sunrises always follow sunsets (no exception so far)
that tide out is always followed by tide in,
that old ones die and new ones are born,
that everything about natural life speaks to us of renewal and new birth.

And as for supernatural life,
we believe that God enters directly into suffering to bring redemption,
that our walking woundedness, when coupled with generosity and sacrifice, becomes something else,
something wonderful
that make us overflow with light and life.

We remember these things also today, and not just the sadness
and we remember the wonderful international solidarity
the heroic example of the Haitian people
and the fact that God used our weakness over the past year to do great things.

I retired our chalice today, the way a ball club will retire the uniform of an extraordinary player.
The great chalice of 2010.
Every morning, simple wine was poured into that chalice
the cup of sacrifice and salvation
and it became something else,
a cup of life

and our participation in the transformation is what made us able
to do great things as wounded healers, for a whole long year.

Our Lord says,
Do you really think you can drink of the cup I must drink from?

We say: We will try, with your help, by God's grace, we will try.

And we did.

Every single day from January 12, 2010 to January 12, 2011.
And it has made all the difference.

The chalice now will be a monument to a devastating year buoyed by steadfast faith,
the chalice of 2010,
the year we learned that all the promised power of the cup of salvation is true power.

The new chalice, donated to the memory of Francesca Rava, our invisible Godsister
is ready to bring us again old mysteries ever new
and we are eager for its blessings, starting tomorrow.

Thank you for your emails of support and sympathy today.
We will remember you as we drink from the sacred cup!

Fr Rick Frechette
Jan 12 2011