

The Angels are Singing for you

I have two radio stations programmed in my car radio – KCBX for Public Radio and KUSC for classical music. This morning I was driving into San Luis Obispo, listening to Morning Edition on NPR. The segment was about our relationship with Russia. Suddenly I couldn't listen any longer and hit the button for KUSC, which took me into the middle of the Angel's Carol by John Rutter. What a contrast; from human conflict to angels singing peace on earth.

And both are true.

Sometimes in the middle of the holiday rush, the family gatherings and the cheerfulness it seems almost rude to mention the other part of life – the sadness, the grief and the conflict. It seems as though everyone is listening to the happy channel; but the sad channel is still there and sometimes it plays much louder.

This service is a time to acknowledge that both are true – the weight of being human, and the lightness of the angels.

You may be here tonight because it is hard to switch to the angels singing peace on earth when you are carrying heaviness for whatever reason.

Heaven knows this has been another difficult year for all of us but especially for those who have experienced profound personal loss. Many of us have lost loved ones, either from death or because they have moved or have ceased to know their friends. Many of us have experienced changes in our work life or in our health. Many of us are away from family or even estranged from family.

Whatever the sadness in your heart, the angels are singing for you too.

There will be times when you can hear them and times when you cannot. And both are ok. Feelings are like waves, they come and go. The poet

Rainer Maria Rilke wrote, “Let everything happen to you, beauty and terror: just keep going, no feeling is final.”

No feeling is final. If I had stayed with NPR there would have been another news item. KUSC soon moved to another piece of music.

In a few minutes I will invite you to write down the things that weigh heavily on your heart tonight, and then there will be a time to bring your card to the creche and lay it in front of the Holy Family. Although this service is live-streaming on Facebook, we will not show this part of the program – anyone watching will see just the creche, not you. When you bring your card and place it in the basket, you will be giving your sadness to God and asking for the grace of the newborn Christ to assist you in leaving it there.

When we can give our grief to God then we can let it be like waves that wash over us or through us, we do not need to try and hold them back, nor do we need to hold on to them as though holding on to grief will bring our loved one back. We can just allow it to be. Allow whatever we feel to be and to ebb and flow, we can keep going on knowing that no feeling is final.

God knows the grief and the heaviness of being human. The scriptures tell us that Jesus wept and that on the cross he felt completely separate from God his father.

God knows what you are experiencing tonight and in your life at present. And God is ready to comfort and strengthen you at this difficult time. As Rilke said, “just keep going, no feeling is final.”

The angels are singing for you right now.