

MINISTRY MOMENT:

Please don't understand me wrong here, my observation is a small and very limited one and there is nothing significant in what I am expressing except from my vantage point only. But why does it seem that people always die in threes? Ok, so that superstitious thought is not true this time; it was only two people who passed this time - not three. But both deaths came as a surprise.

Mario was almost 100 years of age and I had last spoken with him on Monday January 5, 2015. We talked together and he was quite talkative as usual. He had a quick mind which was quite remarkable and full of wit considering his age. I was not sure of Mario's faith position before he had come to the nursing home, but he and I seemed to hit it off and he came to the worship service each week. It was my pleasure to assure him of the love of God as expressed to us by the cross of Jesus.

Then there was Isabelle whom I last saw on December 10, 2014. Miss Izzy had been in her home some seven years, was only in her mid-fifties, and during that time we had formed a good friendship. I do not think she was a Christian when I first met her but in the time while we were together she had blossomed in faith in Jesus. Well maybe *blossom* is too strong a word, but she certainly started with the faith the size of a mustard seed and I watched it grow.

Both Mario and Izzy may have been infirm in one way or another, but on the days that I learned of their separate deaths I was literally shocked because I did not expect it at all.

I am used to people passing away in my line of work, but when these two friends of mine passed, I didn't see it coming. It left me thinking how important it is to love the people we are with while we can.

Apparently I wasn't the only person who was shocked. Friends of Izzy did not expect it either. The week I met with Izzy's friends, I actually scrapped what I had prepared to share

and just listen to them talk. Many vented their feelings, incredulous at how quickly life can leave a body. One person even commented that it behooves us all to make sure that we are always ready to meet our maker. I really could not have said it better myself.

As I spent time with Izzy's friends we simply talked about her and our own inner fascinations and fears concerning the fragility of life in general and how fleeting it all was.

I thought about Izzy's small mustard seed sized faith and realized that it was still blossoming among her friends ever so nicely and I am positive that she would have been pleased.

As for me, I left that day having spent a few extra minutes shaking hands with people and I was a little more eager to get home and see the wife and kids.

~John

PRAYER LETTER:

Just a few words as I share with you the prayer needs that we have this month.

Please pray that as our family gears up to share the gospel in our own neighborhood among our neighbors that we are prepared for the task. This social outreach to basically strangers is out of our comfort zones so it is going to be challenging. Except for Sela (our oldest)--she is so excited I think she might bust at the seams.

Then I noticed that three of our board members are rotating off the board this year. Please be in prayer for who we might ask to sit on the board. I would like to say that sitting on our board is a high position in life, but it amounts to just praying regularly for us and the ministry and approving the budget once a year. The board makes the ministry legal in the eyes of the government. Also, if you yourself would be willing to sit on our board as a board member, please let me know as I have no idea who to ask at this point. Please pray if God would have you help us in this way.

Please pray for my work with the residents as I am seeking direction about how to increase the relationship factor. It is one thing to go in and do a worship service with the residents but the gospel really hits home in relationship. Please pray with me about how I am able to best accomplish this in my interactions with the people God has privileged me to minister to.

Finally, please pray for Kayla (our missionary to the Moravian Corridor) as she is expecting her second child with all the fatigues and illnesses that go with that. Pray that she will be able to victoriously manage her work, her ministry, and her family with her health needs. I pray for all of you. I ask that God would not just bless your prosperity but that He would enable your hearts and minds to know Him personally. I pray that you would recognize the significance that YOU make to this ministry; to me, the residents, and the children with their communities overseas who receive the shoebox gifts that we send. Seriously, since there are only 26 folks who support this ministry financially on a regular basis, you really are a vital part of the gospel that is proclaimed here. I am blessed and honored to have you as part of our little mission that makes quite a dent in this big world with the Gospel of our Lord. Thank you.

In His service with you,



John Rock