

THE CATHOLIC GLOBE ...in the classroom

CATHOLIC CATECHESIS
on a 'Global' level

ON THE RECORD

Discovering ways to keep flame alive



By CHARLIE MARTIN

Miranda Lambert's latest release is the double disc "The Weight of These Wings." Lambert is a well-established country star, but she also gets airplay on pop stations. This latest work is her effort to reflect on the losses and triumphs in her personal life.

The single "Keeper of the Flame" off this disc aptly describes how Lambert needed to find her emotional and spiritual resilience to move ahead with her life. The song's character speaks about how "I've been burned down to ashes."

Yet, she finds herself "waiting for the wind to carry me and start a fire again." She sees herself as "the keeper of the flame," a protector of the power and energy of life that each of us carries within our souls.

Both her insight and her emotional stamina are commendable. As we all know, life can bring times of hurt, disappointment, even despair. Discovering ways to keep the "flame" alive, even if it just seems only to be flickering, is the spiritual power of resilience.

So how do we access this power when we need it? What generates the inner quality of resilience that can keep us going when the future looks far different from what we wanted?

Tapping into this spiritual power is a process. The first step is to accept your feelings, not run away from them. Hurt, anger, disappointment and grief are normal responses to loss. In fact, they are the first part of healing, for no healing occurs without feeling.

This first step is difficult. Facing one's emotional and spiritual pain means telling the truth and allowing such feelings to move through you.

This step requires both understanding and support from others. We need to understand that emotions, no matter what we are feeling, is energy in motion. Thus, no emotional experience will last, for all feeling is a wave of energy that, like any type of wave, eventually passes.

The passing of the wave is helped along by compassionate support of others. Facing emotional pain alone tends to prolong it. When we share the feelings in our heart with those we trust, we create a space for additional feelings.

What also helps to activate resilience is an ongoing connection with God. Make God an ally for healing as you face difficult feelings, and, eventually, for letting new hopes and dreams emerge.

Even when the road to healing and renewal seems long and uncertain, we can invite God to be our constant companion. Find times of quiet to tell God whatever you are feeling, for his presence and love is always stronger than any feeling. Ask God to help you to recognize those choices and attitudes that can most empower your resilience.

The truth is that each of us is a "keeper of the flame."

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"Keeper of the Flame"

I'm walking in their footsteps
I'm singing their old songs
Somebody blazed this trail
I'm treadin' on
I'm bent but I'm not broken
I'm stronger than I feel
I'm made of flesh and bone
Not made of steel

Refrain:

I'm the keeper of the flame
The teller of the story
Keeper of the flame
For the ones that came before me
For the little pilot lights waiting to ignite
Like fireflies in the rain
Keeper of the flame

I've been burned down to ashes
Waiting for the wind
To carry me and start a fire again
Sometimes I'm just a flicker
A candle in your eye
But I swear to God
I'll never let it die

(Repeat refrain.)

When I'm drowning
When I'm fighting
When I'm screaming
When I'm hiding
When I'm losing
When I'm winning
I go back to
The beginning

Keeper of the flame
The teller of the story
Keeper of the flame
I'm not doing it for the glory
But for those little pilot lights waiting to ignite
Like fireflies in the rain
Keeper of the flame

Sung by Miranda Lambert
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CHILDREN'S STORY

The risen Jesus appears to his friends

By JENNIFER FICCAGLIA
Catholic News Service

On the third day after Jesus' death, Mary of Magdala went to his tomb. The stone had been rolled away and the body gone.

She ran to tell the apostles. Peter and another apostle rushed to the tomb and found only Jesus' burial cloths inside. They did not understand that Jesus had risen from the dead.

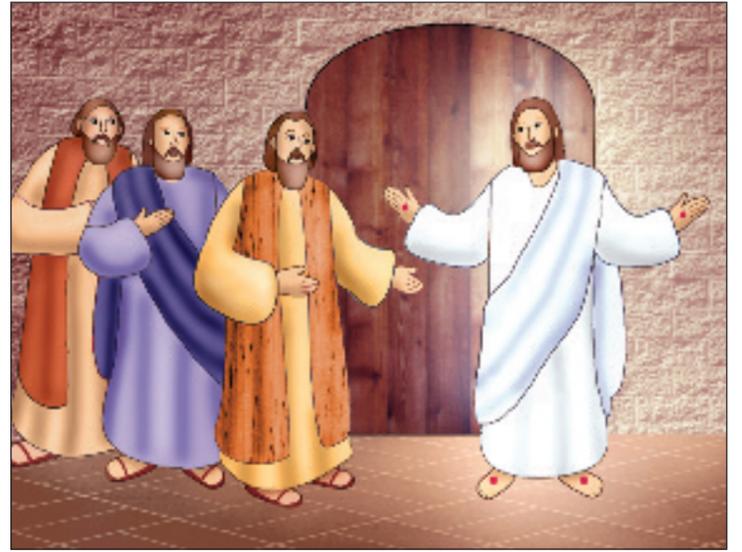
The two apostles returned to a home in which Jesus' followers had locked themselves.

But Mary stayed at the tomb and wept. Suddenly, Jesus appeared. At first, Mary did not recognize him. But when she finally did, her sorrow turned to joy. Jesus asked her to tell the apostles that she had seen him.

"But go to my brothers and tell them, 'I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God,'" he told Mary to say.

That evening, after hearing of Jesus' appearance to Mary, the apostles received their own visit from the Lord.

"Peace be with you," Jesus said as he suddenly appeared inside their



locked room.

Jesus' friends started to rejoice. The Lord then breathed the Holy Spirit upon them.

"Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained," he told his friends.

One of Jesus' apostles was not there to witness the Lord's appearance. His name was Thomas. He refused to believe that his friends had seen Jesus.

"Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe," he told them.

A week later, Thomas was with his friends in the locked room when Jesus again came into their midst.

"Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side," Jesus told Thomas, "and do not be unbelieving, but believe."

Thomas did what he was told. He looked at Jesus.

"My Lord and my God!" Thomas exclaimed.

"Have you come to believe because you have seen me?" Jesus asked his friend. "Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

READ MORE ABOUT IT:
John 20

Q&A
1. What did the apostles find in Jesus' tomb?
2. Which apostle did not believe that his friends had seen Jesus?

PUZZLE

Unscramble the words to reveal a sentence from the children's story.
od ton eb leebivnug tub
beeevil

Answer: See page 15

TRIVIA

What other name does Jesus call the Holy Spirit? (Hint: John 14:26)

Answer: See page 15

FEATURED SAINT: St. Zita

St. Zita was born in Monte Sagrati, Italy, in 1218. When she was 12, she went to live in the village of Lucca to be a servant for a family that owned a wool and silk weaving business.

She was devoted to prayer and was hardworking. She always gave food and clothing to the poor. At first, the other servants in the household did not like Zita, but in time she won them over and they came to admire her.

She also was very well-liked by the family she served, and she eventually was put in charge of the household. The family allowed her all the time she wanted to visit the sick, poor and imprisoned. She especially was devoted to those prisoners who were going to be put to death.

She served the same family for 48 years and died peacefully in 1278 at age 60. We remember her on April 27.

BIBLE ACCENT

Jesus appears to followers before Ascension

Jesus appeared to his followers several times before ascending into heaven.

In Luke 24, two of his friends were walking along a road to a village near Jerusalem called Emmaus. As the two were talking about what had happened to Jesus, the Lord appeared and began walking with them. His friends did not recognize him, however.

After reaching Emmaus, the two friends asked Jesus to stay with them. Jesus broke bread with them,

and just as they recognized him, he disappeared.

In John 21, Jesus appeared to seven of his followers – one of whom was Simon Peter – who were fishing at the Sea of Tiberias. They saw him on shore as they brought their boat in. He told them to come and eat a breakfast of bread and fish.

As Jesus talked and handed out the food, his followers finally recognized him. It was during this visit that Jesus told Simon Peter to feed his lambs and sheep.

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