

## PASTOR'S COLUMN

### *“In the Twinkling of an Eye...”*

In the last several weeks, all of us, family members of the Global Village, have been caught up with the natural catastrophe of the Indian Ocean earthquake and the resulting tsunamis.

As I write this, over 155,000 people have been killed. Many more are still missing. How do we find “a place” for this event in our thoughts and prayers and in our lives?

My ongoing reflection has continuously brought me back to one phrase of Scripture - “...in the twinkling of an eye...” - how quickly, completely, so enormously, and immediately life can change. Be it in a rare event of a tsunami, or in the very common events in family life – death, loss of a job, diagnosis of an ongoing illness.

As the phrase - “...in the twinkling of any eye...” - kept running through my mind, I went to Scripture to find the context in which the phrase is used.

My search led me to St. Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 15, verse 52. It is there that the phrase is found. This led me to read the entire chapter so that the phrase would be in context. This led to very prayerful reflection for me.

I would encourage you to do the same. If there is some thought, idea, literary quote, scriptural verse that is haunting you because of the tsunami, follow it up, find it, its context, and then take time to reflect on the message found therein.

May each of us learn from this event, and become more loving, caring, and sensitive people.

At the same time, let each of us do what we can do to financially relieve the suffering. Governments around the world are pledging their support, as well as private institutions, and individuals. Our financial support should equal the magnitude of this disaster.

Reaching out to the countries affected, especially Indonesia which has the largest number of victims, and has an Islamic population which is the largest in the world, can greatly help to create better ties and understanding between East and West, between Christians and Moslems.

The United States presently is spending \$4 to \$7 billion per month in the War on Iraq. Hopefully we can spend a “month’s worth” of the War on relief for tsunami victims. In my opinion, this kind of outreach will have much greater and lasting results in our world coming together than does war.

Also, we should not just look to our government. Each of us must look into our heart and determine what we can give personally for the relief effort.

Last weekend we attached envelopes to the Bulletin for “Tsunami Relief.” Envelopes are also available in the back of the Church and in the Parish Office. We will be taking up the collection during the month of January and then forwarding the proceeds to Catholic Relief Services. Your generosity would be greatly appreciated.

As we go about our lives, let us be mindful that we are subject to Creation and to the God who created the world in which we live. We are not “over” or “above” Creation; we are a part of it. And like all Creation, things change “...in the twinkling of an eye...” and it is not a question of “if,” but “when!”