

Stretching toward the love of Christ

November 3, 2019



How have you experienced God's love reaching into your life? When I returned from the war in Iraq, I, like many veterans, found myself in a spiritual desert. The loneliness of time away from my wife, and the trauma of seeing so much suffering had left me quite empty. I really felt no connection with God. When my wife and I moved to our next assignment at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, we decided to try going back to church. Shortly after that, we learned Gab was pregnant with twin boys. About 7 months into the pregnancy she developed complications and required an emergency C-section. The boys were born at 32 weeks and were large for their gestational age. They were admitted to the NICU for observation, feeding and growth. About the third day, Franklin began having difficulty breathing and had to be intubated to help him breathe. Now I had to watch my newborn son be the one suffering and struggling to survive. I prayed for God to protect and heal him, but also realized the true medical risk involved. As days passed, both boys began to improve, and after 6 weeks were well enough to come home. I look back on that period as a time of strengthening my faith and dependence on God. Since then, I have been blessed with another set of twins, this time, girls. As I look at my children, I see the amazing gift God gave me. Not only has He given me a home full of love, but he has used the same gift to help heal me from the trauma I experienced in Iraq. In Iraq I had borne the suffering of others on my own shoulders. God used the pain of watching my child suffer to show me His Divine providence and allow me to depend on Him for my strength and refuge.

How do you see yourself and our community of faith reaching out in love to others, community, etc? I look at the members of Nativity and see so much talent, in so many areas. At the same time, I look at the community surrounding our church campus and see amazing need. There is poverty, educational struggle, broken families, crime, fear, and the list goes on. As I look at the members of this congregation, I see so many who are willing, even wanting to help. I hear it in their voices, and with their impassioned pleas during adult forum. My children experience it in Sunday School. I believe many of our number (myself included) just don't know how or where to apply their talents to help those outside our walls. I also believe that Dale, our new Canon, truly has a desire to engage with the surrounding community. I think we are at an amazing moment to apply the talents present within this community of faith to the need that resides just outside the stained glass of this Cathedral, and I am excited.

Kurk Harris