



Behold I am with you always!

By Joanne Repasky

I remember as a child walking with my cousins to The Blessed Sacrament Church on Saturday afternoons to go to confession, back then you didn't receive the Eucharist unless you went to confession the day before. It was at least a mile to the church and on our way with Rosary Beads in hand, we would recite the Rosary. I don't think it was entirely our idea to do this. Our parents probably weren't even aware of it. Also, there was a cemetery in our neighborhood and my cousins and I would stroll through the cemetery praying for the deceased buried there. Again, not a normal pastime for children.

As I got older the world stepped into my life...school, dating, marriage, children and caregiving. Along with this came many personal challenges. My Mom and Uncle Leo (who lived with us) both were physically handicapped due to contracting Polio each at eighteen months old. My Dad was diabetic and suffered two amputations. Being an only child, I became a caregiver at a very early age.

After marriage, I was blessed with two healthy daughters, then I became pregnant again with my third daughter who was born with heart defects and died at six months old. Over the years I would also lose my mom, dad, uncle and husband. Later on, I would reflect and think back to myself and say; "Wow, how did I ever survive and get through all of that?"

As life went on after the death of my husband, one of my daughter's said to me, that I would be okay, and would be stronger than I thought. However, at the time I knew where my strength was coming from, not from myself. But the Holy Spirit has been with me all my life giving me strength, guidance and comfort.

Currently, I am participating in a Bible Study, "Living in the Power of the Spirit" As I have gone deeper into the study, I am made more and more aware of the Holy Spirit in my life. While reflecting back, I realize now that as an infant I was truly baptized with the Holy Spirit and even as a child the Spirit was already working in my life.

To my surprise! This year at Christmas, I received two gifts to confirm my involvement with the bible study at this time. One gift was from my daughter, a beautiful Black Wrought Iron Cross with the Holy Spirit Dove on it (See picture above).

The second gift was from my granddaughter who knows I turn to art and crafts for relaxation. She gave me two-Adult Coloring Books, "Jesus Calling" and "A Very Blessed Christmas," both books had a Dove on their covers. "Wow!"

I suspect the reasons that they chose these gifts for me, was because I have a collection of bird and duck figures. So, I believe that this was the reason these gifts were chosen. I feel as though the Holy Spirit was guiding them so that I would know that he is still with me and always will be as long as I surrender to him.

The Lord promises us: ***"Behold I am with you always, until the end of the age. (Matthew 28: 20)***



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