

A FEW WORDS FOR ED . . . AND DE AND SADIE

Christ is risen!

Beloved to Christ,

I love and miss you all. It is with much regret that I cannot be present with you today. However, I wanted to — or rather NEEDED — to offer you a few words on this tragic occasion. I am so very grateful to my brothers and concelebrants: Fr. Peter Cox for allowing me to offer these words and Fr. Luke Melackrinos for delivering them.

We are all feeling so many different emotions right now: shock, grief, anger, confusion, and sadness beyond measure. It is trite but it is also true that everyone experiences grief differently.

There are no words to cover over your spiritual wounds. Today we are all broken. Today we are all devastated.

Ed was *so* smart. So witty. He would ask the most interesting and surprising questions to me — never to trying to prove a point or show off (as sometimes folks do to clergy) — but always with a genuine curiosity.

What was always surprising about Ed was his humility. He was never hesitant to roll up his sleeves and help out. I remember coming to the realization — early in my pastorate at St. Thomas — that one of the most important medical experts in the state of Iowa was currently elbow deep in dirty plates and cutlery! This man who could have earned zillions of dollars with his credentials and talents was content spend a Saturday washing dishes for our parish dinner.

Ed had so much to give and indeed he gave a lot.

There was, of course, a sadder part to him. There was a sorrow deep in his bones.

If I may speak frankly, we connected over this. Depression is a parasite that steals your joy, your vitality, and saps pleasure from everything in your life — whether profound or mundane. Depression is, as one professional defined it, “the inability to enjoy a sunset.”

When it is deeply implanted, it is terribly hard to root out.

If there is one thing that I want you to hear about Ed today, it is this: **he fought**. He struggled against this . . . he tried. This disease is merciless.

Without justifying . . . without accepting . . . without trying to grasp the fullness of what has happened . . . Please hear this from this me:

Ed suffered from a terrible disease. His disease was not his fault. It was not your fault. We are only beginning to understand the causes and risk factors. In some ways, we are still in the stone age of mental healthcare.

Ed suffered. As a doctor, he knew some of the nature and complexity of his suffering. He also knew what he *didn't* know.

Ed suffered. . . . and he tried to fight this disease.

Please hear me: he tried. I know he did. With my own eyes and ears, I witnessed the struggle.

Please do not forget, that for many years, he fought tirelessly against these most tiresome of forces.

Ed also believed. His prayer was the Prayer of the Epileptic's Father, "Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief.

Today, in the face of this tragic and untimely loss, we have hope that God has heard the prayers of his servant.

. . . .

There are no more words that I can offer other than these . . . Deana, I know he loved you and wished he could love you more. Sadie, he loved you as his own.

To both of you, he never had a lot of self-confidence as a husband or a father. He tried to love you both as best as he could.

Please know that Kh. Nicole and I love you both very much. You will forever remain in our prayers and you always have a place to stay here in the Bluegrass State.

May the God of all comfort bring you hope and healing,

In Christ,

Fr. Lucas