

"Let them grow together ...until harvest!"

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Once upon a time, a popular bumper sticker read: **"Stop the world; I want to get off."**

The slogan was in protest to all of the insanity in the world. Insanity waxed from the halls of Congress locked in hopeless 'gridlock' & endless 'obstructionism,' to the paths in national zoos.

For example, at the Detroit zoo, four extra, security guards were hired to protect the animals from the people. A baby, Australian wallaby had strayed from its mother, only to be stoned to death by kids. There was an alligator pit, where adults dropped lit cigar butts on the sunning alligators to watch the reaction once the cigar coal burned through the alligator's skin. They roared with laughter as the alligators writhed in pain.

So, what's the answer? **"What can we do in a world, spinning hopelessly out of control?" you ask. Well, I am glad you asked that question!**

Basically, we have one of two ways to answer.

1. We can throw our hands up in frustration & scream out,
"Stop the world; I want to get off."

That is, we can choose to curse the darkness and say,

"The heck with the world. If it wants to go to Hades in a handbag, so be it."

O-o-o-r

2. We can choose **not** to curse the darkness. **BUT** accept it for what it is, light a candle in prayer, roll up our sleeves, and do what we can to change things as best we can, if only in our corner of the vineyard, where we live and eat and sleep.

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*I now share with you a story about what one person can do:*

**"The person was a 22-year old student at Simon Fraser University in Canada, named Terry Fox.**

*In 1987, Terry contracted bone cancer and had to have his right leg amputated. When his high school basketball coach heard about the tragedy, he sent Terry a news article about an amputee who ran in the New York Marathon. As his coach had hoped, the article triggered Terry's imagination. He knew he had only a few years to live and he wanted to do something significant.*

*He decided he would try to run across Canada, from Newfoundland to British Columbia, a distance of 5,000 miles. He would ask people to sponsor him and give the proceeds to cancer research. For 18 months, Terry practiced running on the artificial leg.*

*Finally, on April 12, 1990, he began his run. He dipped his artificial leg in the Atlantic and set out across Canada. In his pocket, he had pledges totaling over a million dollars.*

*Then, 114 days and 3,000 miles into the run, Terry suddenly collapsed. The cancer had spread to his lungs. He was unable to complete the run.*

*When the news of Terry's collapse broke, people from all over Canada began sending pledges to him in the hospital. In hours, over \$24 million was pledged. A few days later, Terry died.*

*If anyone had a right to curse the darkness, it was Terry. **BUT** he was too big for that. He decided to light a candle & roll up his sleeves. That light has been shining ever since. A movie has been made of his life. A stamp has been issued in his honor. And he is the youngest person ever to receive his nation's highest honor, the Order of Canada. To this day, Terry still excites the imagination of people."*

*There's a sequel to that story. A 44-year-old postal, mail carrier, Donald Marrs, lived in Cincinnati. Like Terry, he was a cancer victim. Marrs was so moved by Terry's story that he decided to complete his run for him.*

*He began below Chicago and, in three months, reached the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. As he headed across it, a drizzle was falling. When he dipped his hand into the Pacific Ocean, completing Terry's run, a huge rainbow arched across the sky.*

*It was a remarkable end to a remarkable run.*



*There's a parable for us in that sequel.*

*As you well know, Jesus Christ established the Kingdom of God, **BUT** he died before it reached completion, just as Terry died before his run reached completion.*

*We are like Donald Marrs. We are being invited to take the baton from Jesus' hand and to complete his work, once again, at least 'in our corner of the vineyard.'*

*This is the challenge that emerges from today's Gospel; it's an invitation being held out to each of us.*

***We may not be able to do what Terry did.***

*We may not be able to do what Donald Marrs did.*

*We may not even be able to do what the person sitting next to us can do.*

***BUT***, and there's that proverbial ***'BUT'*** in life, we *CAN* do *SOMETHING*.

*Each of us must consult our own conscience and decide:*

*...if we are going to curse the darkness and try to run away from all the insanity  
...or*

***how we can best light a candle and roll up our sleeves, at least, 'in our corner of the vineyard.'***

*May Almighty God, our Abba of endless hope, bless you,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*