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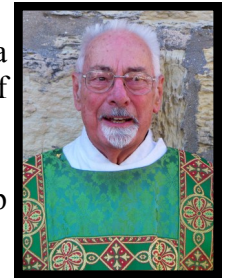
The Shining Son

THE SHINING SON

JANUARY 2012

Fight the Battle With Grace

By: Deacon Vince Slomian



Dear TECites and families,

I have been preparing for a homily on Epiphany Sunday. By the time you get this, Epiphany will be over, but it won't be too late for you to check online for the Tony Melendez Story.

It's been a very moving story for me. You see, Tony Melendez plays the guitar and sings. He doesn't have any arms. He appeared before Pope John Paul II in Los Angeles in 1987.

The Pope was so

moved by Tony's faith and courage that he left the stage and wrapped his arms around Tony's armless body and kissed him.

Tony appeared at Holy Cross in Mendota on Oct. 7, 1993. I had the privilege to hug Tony too, as he performed for us at Holy Cross.

Tony's story is not a Christmas Story. Rather it's an Epiphany story. It's a story about the feast of Epiphany. (The appearance and manifestation of Jesus Christ.)

It's a story of someone who lights up the darkness

of our world the way the star of Bethlehem lit up the darkness of the ancient world for the three wise men.

Tony's deep faith and courage is a modern star of Bethlehem for people in the darkness of our modern world.

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New Year's Resolutions

New Year's Eve has always been a time for looking back to the past, and more importantly, forward to the coming year.

It's a time to reflect on the changes we want (or need) to make and resolve to follow through on those changes.

What are your New Year's Resolutions? It's

now the end of January. How are your resolutions coming? Have you stuck to them? Revised them? Given up altogether?

What does your resolution include? Exercise more? Quit smoking? Stay organized? Get out of debt? Find a better job? Spend more time with family and friends?

How about adding

something more spiritual to your list?

Spending more time in prayer can definitely help you with all of your other resolutions because He is the source of all things worthy of your time and effort.

Try adding another resolution to your list. Perhaps write more wheat notes or serve on a team.

Pass It On . . . A Note From Brenda

By: Brenda Barnickel, Lay Director

“Always Loved,
Always Remembered”

These are the words on the home page of the official website that is now up and ready for all donations that will go towards a special project in remembrance of Captain Thomas Heitmann.

I encourage you to visit <http://capttjhmemorial.com/Home Page.html> and ask you to consider giving a donation to this special cause.

Members of our TEC family are involved in this fundraiser. A formal fundraising event is also being planned. Details will be shared in a future TEC Newsletter.

Here are a few excerpts from the site:

“Captain Heitmann, Tom to his friends, was

a member of the Saint Bede Academy graduating class of 2002 (Peru, Illinois).

“While at St. Bede,

four-year choir member and cast in the Academy’s musicals.

“On top of the arts and athletics, Tom was also active in his faith, serving as a Eucharistic minister at the Academy and participating in TEC (Teens Encounter Christ).

“In honor of our good friend, the Saint Bede Academy

graduating class of 2002 is working towards a dedication gift to the Academy as a memorial in Tom’s name.

“Plans are underway to purchase a new scoreboard for the football field, including a plaque immortalizing our fallen friend, Captain Thomas John Heitmann.”

Pass It On . . . Give from the heart . . . In a true hero’s memory.

Tom lettered four years in football with three years in track and one in basketball. He was a part of the most successful football team in the Academy’s history and was inducted with his team into SBA’s Hall of Fame.

He was also the 2002 News Tribune Boys Track and Field Athlete of the Year; he still holds two of St. Bede’s track and field records.

“Tom was involved in the arts as well; he was a



TEC Congress '12

From Riverbend TEC

The snow is falling (at least in some places), and that can only mean one thing . . . it's time to start thinking about next summer and the TEC Congress.

Riverbend TEC in Minnesota will be hosting the Congress August 3-5 in St. Peter, MN and we want you to be there!

Our theme is "Tending the Vine" and we have a great weekend planned for all. Look for registration to be available soon.

We are also very excited to be offering the first ever youth track to be offered at a TEC Congress. If in the past

you thought the Congress was only for seasoned leaders in your TEC Community, think again!

This youth track will be a TAP (TEC Ambassador Program retreat).

The TAP retreat, which has been endorsed by the TEC Conference, is a retreat program designed to support, train, and encourage participants to share their TEC experience with others and invite them into our community.

Adults interested in the TAP Program are welcome to participate as well.

We can all safely say that the success of our TEC Programs ride on relational ministry and work of mouth evangelization.

So please encourage your youth and young adults to attend.



Keep Us Updated

Did you know that the TEC Program is charged a fee for non-deliverable newsletters or for the forwarding of some newsletters to new addresses?

Therefore, it is very important to have correct addresses on file to keep costs reduced.

If you plan to move or have had a change of address, please send it to newsletter@peterstowntec.com.

To reduce printing and mailing costs, the Peterstown TEC Community is sending the majority of our publications electronically.

Other TEC notifications are also sent out through Email.

Therefore, it is very important that we have updated email addresses. Please send your updated Email addresses to Brenda Barnickel at laydirector@peterstowntec.com or to Kim Souba, Newsletter and Website Chairman at newslet-ter@peterstowntec.com.

Saving money on newsletters will allow the TEC Community to use the funds for the "Good of the Program."

Clip and Save

Important TEC Dates

Please make sure to mark your calendar so that you don't miss out on all the fun we have at the TEC Hilton, spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ.

The following are the important dates:

- + **Jan. 25:** First Team Meeting TEC 178
- + **Feb. 15:** Council Meeting 6p.m.
- + **Feb. 20:** First Team Meeting TEC 179
- + **Feb. 22:** Ash Wednesday
- + **Feb. 25-27:** TEC 178 (Boys)
- + **Feb. 26:** Hoot Mass 5:30p.m.
- + **Feb. 27:** TEC Center Clean-up 4:30p.m.
- + **March 4:** Follow-up 5:30p.m.
- + **March 24-26:** TEC 179
- + **April 1:** Follow-up 5:30p.m.

Peterstown Wish List

Peterstown TEC Newsletter will include a wish list of items needed for the greater community.

Some items need to be specific and are required to be purchased by a certain date to prepare properly for a TEC weekend.

Those types of items have been marked accordingly with an asterisk.

If you would still like to give a monetary donation, but designate it for something on the list, please communicate that as well.

If you have any questions about something on the general list or suggestions about something not listed, please contact me at laydirector@peterstowntec.com.

I can also be reached by phone at 815-973-6606 or 815-538-2091.

Please contact Rose

Rose, our Kitchen Chairman, in regards to food donations for a TEC weekend, at kitchen@peterstowntec.com

or by phone at 815-638-2165.

Thanks for your Wheat and "Passing It On" in this way.

- White Letter and Business size envelopes
- 10x13 Manilla envelopes with clasps
- Colored copy machine

Coke, Sprite, Sprite Zero, Mountain Dew and Diet Mountain Dew) (*contact Brenda for what is low in supply)

- Bottled water
- Donations designated for TEC Crosses/Bibles

Please contact Rose for specific quantity, type, and deadline dates for the following:

- 2 % and Skim Milk
- Lemonade Mix
- Coffee
- Sugar/ Creamer
- Fruit
- Cereal
- Cheese
- Butter/ Syrup
- Potatoes
- Frozen Vegetables
- Fresh Vegetables (carrots, celery, cauliflower, broccoli)
- Lettuce
- Salad Dressing
- Condiments
- Meat
- Lasagna Noodles
- Ziplock Bags, aluminum foil, saran wrap, paper towels
- 100% cotton hand towels and large
- 100% white 36" square cotton drying towels (feed sack)



Open Up to God's Grace

From page 1

People are attracted to the light of the star.

Tony's story makes an important point. If many people today are to find their way through the spiritual darkness of our world to the infant lying in the manger, it will have to be through the faith and example of people like Tony.

Their faith and example speak more eloquently to most



people than do homilies preached in churches. They speak not only to the mind but also to the heart. They also reach people who have stopped going to church. And this brings us to the practical application of all this to our own lives.

Each one of us, without exception, is

handicapped to some extent.

We all have something that causes us pain, something we wish we didn't have, and something we wish we could get rid of.

Maybe it's a family situation that is terribly painful. Maybe it's a physical thing, like having an allergy or being very short or too heavy.

Maybe it's a spiritual thing, like finding it hard to live the way Jesus taught us we should. Maybe finding it hard to pray the way we wish we could.

Maybe it's a material thing, like not having enough money to help others the way we'd like to do.

Whatever it is, we have a choice.

We can choose to let our handicap defeat us, or we can choose to battle it and defeat it, as Tony did.

Christmastime is a time of hope. The infant lying in the manger tells us that nothing can defeat us any longer.

No handicap, physical or spiritual, can conquer us.

Thanks to the infant

lying in the manger, we have all the grace we need to battle our handicap and defeat it. And if we do battle our handicap and defeat it, not only will we win a great personal victory, but we will also become an inspiration to others.

We will become a modern star of Bethlehem, lighting the way for some lost traveler.

We will become a light shining in the darkness and pointing the way to the infant lying in the manger.

And so it's up to us! It's our choice!

People like Tony can touch our hearts and inspire us. But in the end, it's up to us to imitate them or not. But if we choose, we can do it. No one can stop us. We can do anything we wish.

The message is that we must open our hearts to God's grace, and we can become modern stars shining in our world, leading others to Bethlehem.

This is the GOOD NEWS contained in Tony's story.

This is the GOOD NEWS of the Encounter Christ Program. "Let Your Light shine!"

P.S. Please view Tony's Story on the internet.

God's

Riches

At

Christ's

Expense



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Keep the Prayers Coming

Please pray for the Team of TEC 178 as they begin their team preparation on Jan. 25.

Team members include: Leader Don McLachlan, Assistant Leaders Herb Buchanan and Zach Vankeulen; Deacon Vince Slomian, Father Chris Haake, Jyll Pozzi, Jim Hoscheid,

Steve Harmon, Derek Green, Michael and Brenda Vaessen, Jim Carboni, Rey Arteaga, Nate Bradford, Don Liesse, Cody Veronda, Anthony Schneider, Cody Zinke, Bryce Erbes, and Rhodes Garland.

Also, please keep all TECites and their families who are suffering

from illness, loss of jobs, and other stressors of life.

May God grace them with His healing touch and give their caregivers strength and faith.

Remember all prayer requests may also be submitted on the Peterstown TEC Website at <https://www.peterstowntec.com>.