

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

MOVED FROM THE CAVE...

The whole world it seemed was caught up recently in the drama of twelve soccer players and their coach who were trapped in a cave in Northern Thailand. Many prayers, including right here from our own Saint Charles Parish, "stormed Heaven" for the Lord to deliver these young men from a horrible fate. As we know, all the boys and the coach were rescued on July 10th after seventeen harrowing days inside a water logged cave.

Yes, the story had a happy ending except for the fact that a former Navy Seal by the name of Lieutenant Saman Kunan lost his life in an operation to save the team. He was the only casualty. Still in the hospital recovering from their harrowing ordeal, the team had a little ceremony of remembrance for the Lieutenant Commander who gave his life for them.

The boys, with their heads bowed gathered around a portrait of Lieutenant Kunan. On the picture were written messages of sympathy and gratitude. They all thanked him and promised to be good boys in the future. I am positive that those rescued players sincerely felt the gratitude in their hearts. When someone is rescued from a seemingly terrible fate, we can readily understand how blessed you feel just to be alive!

In reference to this, we might reflect this Sunday for a moment on Jesus and our faith. That name "Jesus" means "God saves." We refer to Jesus as "Our Savior." The Lord rescued us from the dark cave of our sins and an almost certain death. How grateful are we for that tremendous gift?

This month of July that we are now in is dedicated to the precious blood of Jesus. It "cost" Our Lord a great deal to rescue us-his very blood! The Church tells us that there were seven "sheddings" of the blood of Christ. They are the circumcision, the bloody sweat in the agony in the garden, the terrible scourging at the pillar, the crowning with thorns, the carrying of the cross, the crucifixion on Calvary and finally, the piercing of his side by the soldier after he had expired on Good Friday. In each of these events, Christ offered himself and his blood in sacrifice.

Most of the time, we are not so appreciative of religious things. In fact, we completely forget about what Jesus did for each one of us. The consciousness that we have been "rescued" too, (unlike the soccer players) does not penetrate our thick skulls!

I heard a story once about a protestant minister. The minister was preparing for Holy Week services. He set up a rather large ladder so that he could drape a purple cloth over a cross in the front of the church. After he climbed up the ladder, he tossed the cloth over the cross. As he did this though, the ladder tipped! Frantically, the minister grabbed the bar of the cross and saved himself from a serious fall. He was shaken up but ok. Afterwards he confided to a friend, "That experience helped me to appreciate in a new way how I had been saved by the cross of Christ."

We all have been saved by Jesus sacrifice and if we were a bit more spiritual minded, we would not forget about that. The soccer players were grateful to the Navy Seal who gave his life so that they could be rescued. Each one of us should think about that precious blood of Christ shed for us so that we might be rescued from sin and everlasting death!

*Sincerely in Christ,
Father Jerome*