

# Dear Brothers and Sisters



Last Saturday evening our parish community enjoyed a wonderful night of friendship, food, and festivity, as we celebrated our Oktoberfest. During the course of the night Deacon Stan sang a few songs from his favorite artist: an American folk and country hero, who penned many of his poems to music, including “A Boy Named Sue”, “Folsom Prison Blues”, “Man in Black”, “Walk the Line”, “San Quentin”, “Ring of Fire”, “Five Feet High and Rising”, “One Piece at a Time”.

These are among the works of the singer-songwriter, actor, and author, J.R. Cash, better known to most as “Johnny” Cash, who has been called one of the most influential musicians of the 20th century.

Born into a cotton farming family in 1932, he was the fourth of seven children, and his parents named him J.R. because they couldn’t think of a name. Known for his deep, bass-baritone voice, many of his songs dealt with failure and redemption, as exemplified in one of his best songs “Sunday Morning Coming Down”.

Johnny Cash only sings about it. Many people actually live it.

Sunday Morning Coming Down describes the day of all whose lives are blighted by failure, disappointment, unhappiness, loneliness and despair.

On the surface, perhaps, they seem to cope. They look reasonably normal. They are not too crazy! They manage a smile or a joke. But their reality can be very different indeed. And they know it and can’t deny it.

The Church has a word of hope for all those who feel Sunday Morning Coming Down; all those who look at their personal lives, their close relationships, their marriage, their family, and are not happy with what they see.

A word of hope for those who know their secret sins and shame, their disordered passions and desires and do not like what they know.

A word of hope for those who are too afraid to look; all those who prefer to stay ignorant of their true motives; those who prefer the pains of darkness to coming out into the light.

This word of hope is centered on a person who experienced total failure, complete emptiness, utter darkness; a person who was crucified but received there the seed of a new and different life, which would be experienced on a Sunday Morning.

A person who rose again on the third day, Our Lord Jesus Christ. He is Lord of death and life. Lord over suffering and despair. Lord of Love!

We too can share this experience, this resurrection, this Passover. We too can begin to live with a new hope, a new and different life.

This is what the Church celebrates and proclaims today, and every Sunday, when she celebrates the Paschal Mystery. This is the Good News for those of us who feel trapped in our failures, locked in our sins, fixed in our sufferings and fears.

Receive this hope, this promise again today. Believe the word, trust and have faith. Sunday Morning Coming Down can be transformed into a Sunday in which we experience the Love of God in the midst of our failures, disappointments and despair.

Fr. Sean