

Children's sermon: May 29, 2011

"Sam's light"

My story this morning ... well, it's true. Different names ... but almost "real."
Most of you don't know much about the Vietnam War. In fact ... most of the veterans from this war are about
my age.

It was a tough war.

Many of our veterans from that war came home ... alone, without appreciation.

I'd like you to meet Sam.

When he came home from Vietnam ... years ago ... he came home to no family.

For the past few years ... he has lived alone at the VA Hospital. No one visits him.

Sam's "candle" is lit every morning when he wakes up ... but it doesn't stay lit for long. Sadness and loneliness
can put out a candle's flame very easily.

On the other side of town is a small young candle named Fred.

He could be you.

At his church ... a whole bunch of veterans who can no longer see ... well, they were invited to lunch.
Fred was there. He talked to all the men and women ... and when the afternoon was over ... every one of the
veterans said "thanks" to Fred and all the church folks. They also told Fred how much it means to them ... to
know they are never forgotten.

Fred heard about their friend SAM.

So, the next day ... Fred hops on his bike ... rides to the VA Hospital ... and knocks on Sam's door.

Sam wonders ... "What are you doing here?"

"I met some of your fellow veterans yesterday ... they told me about you ...
it's about time people like me said THANKS for your service. People like you are willing to risk your life ... for
little people like me. Sorry you don't hear the words "thank-you" enough.

Anyway ... Mr. Sam ... THANKS!@!!"

For a brief moment ... Sam's candle starts to burn again.

But as soon as Fred leaves ... his light goes out.

Sam doesn't stop here. Every day ... all summer long ... he rides his bike to visit Sam.

Every day ... Sam's candle burns a little bit ... but then it goes out.

UNTIL TODAY.

Fred comes in ... "Mr. Sam ----- I keep telling you "thanks" ... well, today ... I'm singing you a song."

(For the first time in years ... Sam almost laughs ----- no one has ever sung for ME!@!!)

Are you ready for Fred's song????? ... listen ...

"I believe for every drop of rain that falls ... a flower grows ...

I believe that somewhere in the darkest night ... A CANDLE GLOWS ..."

(And who sings this? ----- AARON NEVILLE ... good stuff.)

"You see, Mr. Sam ... I BELIEVE IN YOU."

With those words ... Sam's flame goes NUTS!@!! It's bright ... it's strong ... it lights up the room.

Sam's light will never go out again. The power of the words "thank-you" the power of believing in our
veterans, as they believe in us. THE POWER OF LOVE.

