

## The Greatest Hope

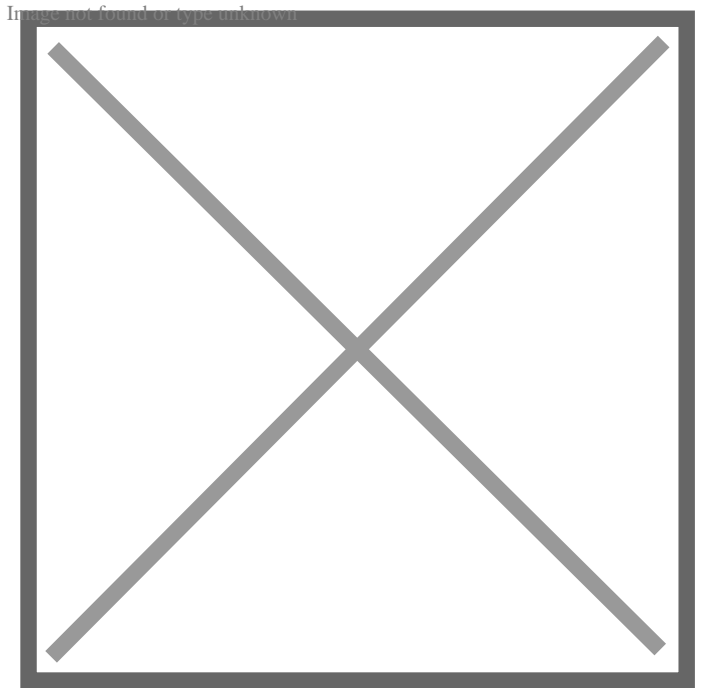
By Commissioner Peter H. Chang –

***“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.” Romans 15:13***

Commissioner Peter H. Chang

But

how, we may well ask St. Paul, are we to abound in hope when hope and history seem destined never to meet? What of the rising tide of crime, unemployment, drug abuse . . . not to mention the inordinate number of recent suspicious deaths in our own districts. How can we possibly abound in hope when it is so common to see suicidal bomb attacks killing so many so frequently?



Selfless revolutionaries who long to release “a second flood to wash the cities of the world,” are surely eminently qualified. But the hope they offer, though real, is limited, for so often those who say they want change really mean they want “exchange” as we have seen all too often in this century of revolutions gone sour.

Correctly, we continue to look to education as a source of hope. But that hope has to be deemed limited too, for again (as our century has also demonstrated), if a little education is dangerous, a great deal can be lethal.

The rich were greedy, the nations crazed with power; truth was on the scaffold, wrong upon the throne; and as the problem was clearly planetary, what any one individual could do was obviously limited. Then Jesus came. It's not really too hard to believe—just too good to believe, we being total strangers to such goodness.

Put yourself in God's place. What were the choices? How else could you bring hope into the world except through a person? How else could you make a statement about love, except through a person? There is little strength in weakness . . . but what strength there is in a clearly voluntary renunciation of power! Isn't that the Godlike restraint the super powers need today to understand? Just think: a little-by-little renunciation of power in order to defeat the great enemy of our day, distrust.

How else do you make a person trustworthy except by trusting? It's true, you take a risk to trust, but

not such a great risk, not when compared with the risk God took in trusting all of us to respond to his voluntary renunciation of power, to his undogmatic caring. And that perhaps is the most hopeful thing we can say about the human race—that God is still willing to trust us, knowing that Christ today is real in the world through the bodies of ordinary men and women. Otherwise, he is no more than a voice in the wind! We are to become as God would have us become. How then can we not be hopeful!

There is more truth—and we can find it. There is more light—and we can see it. There is more love—and we can take it everywhere, for that is what the Holy Spirit is here to help us do. We can bring love to education, for “even though I understand all knowledge and all mysteries . . . if I have not love . . . I am nothing.” We can bring love to dedicated revolutionaries, for “even though I give away all I have and give up my body to be burned” [the very stuff of heroism, don’t you agree?] “but have not love, I gain nothing.” And to the religious right, what can we say other than that the integrity of love is more important than the purity of dogma?

The hope is that love, the long-distance runner, will outlast all competitors. The hope is that love will never die—certainly not with God, therefore not with us.

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