

It is hard to imagine anyone else who lived so short a time yet made such a profound impact on the lives of so many people. Tate cheered us with his smile. He enjoyed being with people. He brought the best out of everyone around him. It's like he had one mission in life, to make people happy, and it did it every day. Even now, Tate is still bringing people together. He is reminding us to make every day count. He is making us discover within ourselves a desire to help other people, an ability to help other people, and the actions that help other people. He has caused an outpouring of love and support for the family that loved and supported him.

We take comfort in the belief that God is taking care of Tate now, but it doesn't completely remove our grief, or the natural desire that we could take care of Tate instead. There are many ways that we still can take care of Tate; gathering today to pray for him is one of those ways. We will also show our care for him in the ways we let his life change ours for the better – in the ways we love one another and pass on to children all that we treasure – our life, our loves, and our faith.

It won't always be easy. Life hands us some pretty difficult days. But we get a lot of good days, too – days that remind of the happy future God has in store for us. This message resounds in the reading we just heard from the Book of Lamentations. It is a proclamation from a people who suffered tremendous hardship and devastation. They had just lost their city, their temple – all that mattered to them. Yet in the midst of their sorrows, they were able to say with confidence, "The favors of the Lord are not exhausted, his mercies are not spent; they are renewed each morning, so great is God's faithfulness." Every day brings a new possibility for us to receive the mercy of God. God has not run out of love; God's love is infinite. Each of us has discovered this week that we have love we never knew was there. That love was placed within us by God, but sometimes it takes a person like Tate to pull it out of us.

Kids are smarter than you think. Even infants reveal things that we could never figure out all by ourselves. As Jesus says, the Father hides things from the wise and the learned, but reveals them to the childlike.

We think we're so smart, but there's a lot we just don't understand. When we open ourselves to the mystery of life, we discover with the heart what cannot discover with the head. The same God who made us is the God who welcomes us home, and the God we discover each day in the joys and sorrows of life. Today we stand before that God, grateful for the gift of life, but in need of someone to help, arms open wide to receive infinite love.