

葡萄藤 *Grapevine*

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「我愛你，我永遠愛你。」(耶三十一:3)

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主編的話

◆王念祖

1995年1月，「葡萄藤」出了一份專刊，紀念范迪的長子，年方九歲就過世的中達。堂區許多教友，寫下了他們的悲傷、思念、與感動。後來台灣的聞道出版社將這份專刊印行出版了「過境人間的天使」這本小書，先後兩版都銷售一空，不但在教友間流傳，也感動了許多外教的朋友。就這樣，中達以他短短的生命、童稚的虔敬、與赤子之心的信賴，讓一粒落在地裏死了的麥子，結出了許多子粒來。

三個月前，我應聞道出版社之請，發出邀稿函，願為這書出版「續集」，以見證這位小天使過境人間後十六年所結出的果實。感謝大家的回應，我收到了二十多篇感人的分享。這些文章都將收入此新書發行，敬請等待。但出書的工程相當耗時，因此我本想把所有稿件全在本期葡萄藤刊出，讓大家先睹為快。但無奈限於篇幅，我只能先將堂區第二代青年所做的分享在本期以原文及中文翻譯刊登。其他文章將放入葡萄藤稿庫，供各期主編採用。

這些年輕人包括中達的：弟弟中權 Marvin、沒見過面的妹妹天愛 Rebecca、表姊 Wendy、最要好的朋友，現居加州的 Homer、最崇拜的大哥哥紹曾 George、喜愛的大姊姊卉卉 Teresa、以及明年將要升任神父的如濱執事 Dcn. Reuben。中達過世時，他們都還只是孩子。十六年的歲月，佔去了他們的年歲一半以上。在他們回顧昔日與今朝的字裏行間，讓人看到在他們成長的歷程中，天主藉著中達帶給他們的祝福。這個祝福也將藉著本期葡萄藤，帶給每一位讀者。

神師的話—面對死亡



◆林育明神父

許多人都害怕面對死亡，因為死亡可怕的地方就在於它的神秘性，及它的不可避兔性。可是，如果我們能夠利用這樣的恐懼，從恐懼中取得有益的效果，我們便會喜歡探究死亡。其實死亡這事是一直詭譎地存在我們的生命中，與其逃避不如勇敢地面對。

死亡雖然有它可怕的一面，但也有它可愛的一方面，對於有信仰的人來說，人的生命來自天主口中的一口氣，從此有靈魂的人類就有了永遠的生命，藉由基督從死者中復活的事實，帶給信徒們希望，讓死亡成為回歸天鄉的過程，因為他/她清楚地知道只有通過死亡他/她才能進入永生的家，聖保祿說：「生活原是基督，死亡乃是利益」(斐一：21)就是最好的信德分享。那些還沒有與教會有所接觸的人，起初可能會受到一種有益的擾亂，那就是在世界上努力做有意義的工作，即所謂「積德行善」。可是後來與教會接觸或者聽了一些教理後，因著對生命的看法不同了，擾亂自然就不存在了，有的反而是一種平安喜樂，期望未來也能回到永恆的天鄉與天主永遠在一起。

聖保祿宗徒也說過：「因為已死的人，便脫離了罪惡。所以，如果我們與基督同死，我們相信也要與他同生，因為我們知道：基督既從死者中復活，就不再死；死亡不再統治他了，因為他死，是死於罪惡，僅僅一次；他活，是活於天主。你們也要這樣看自己是死於罪惡，在基督耶穌內活於天

主的人」。(羅六：7—12)我們中沒有一個人是爲自己而生的，也沒有一個人是爲自己而死，因爲我們或者生是爲主而生，或者爲主而死，所以我們或生或死，都是屬於天主的。我們都知道死亡並非生命的結束，而是通過永生的門徑一死亡，歸回永恒的家鄉—天主。死亡，是我們生命過程中的一項重大改變。一個沒有信仰的人認爲，人死如燈滅，一了百了，在中國人當中，也有人認爲「人死不能復生」。但是對一個有信仰天主的人來說，人死是爲了復生，以回到生命的根源(天主)那裏去。「一粒麥子如果不落在地裏死了，仍只是一粒；如果死了，才結出許多子粒來」(若十二：24)。耶穌說：「我就是復活，就是生命；信從我的，即使死了，仍要活著；凡活著而信從我的人，必永遠不死。」(若十一：25)

相反地，那些沉湎於情慾，醉心於享受的人，面對死亡爲他們是可怕的。因爲這種想法給他們的快樂蒙上了一層恐怖的陰影。其實他們不應當放棄或是逃避去面對死亡，而該冷靜地想一想這種做法的基礎，根據研究心理學的專家發現

‘面對真相’是人類人格成長的必要方式，所以，我們知道這種思想是有根據的。我們既然知道了死亡的真相，便能很容易地得到下面的結論：我們的受造是爲了光榮那永恆生命的根源，且不是短暫的存有。

如果我們爲了現世的事物，而犧牲了我們回歸永恆生命的源頭，那才是真正可怕的事！我們得了這個結論以後，只要再奮勉一下便能回頭改過了。那麼，面對死亡就不是難事了。

現在我們所處的世界是五花八門的，有著各種的試煉，這是讓我們在這個短暫的人生旅程中準備好自己，要謹慎醒

寤，時時警惕，不致迷失方向，落入歧途，並善用天主給我們每個人的恩寵，恪盡自己的本份，勵行各種善功以便將來有臉去見天主的面，以達圓滿喜樂的境界。

死亡，既是我們人生不可避免的事，每個人都要遵守這個自然界的定律，面對我們這個可腐朽的身體，轉變成不可腐朽的形體，即脫離屬肉性的生命(軀殼)，改變成屬靈的形體(靈魂)，因為只有屬靈的形體才能面對永生的天主。

親愛的朋友，在我們人生道路上要努力去認識天主，雖然認識天主的道路是困難重重，但祂所賞賜給我們的賞報也是超過我們所能想像，無法具體用文字形容的。如果我們能夠接受死亡永遠在我們生活的中間這項事實，我們就會學著去接受這個事實。又如果我們相信死亡只是肉性生命的轉換過程，那麼對於經過死亡已轉換成永恆生命的態度又該是什麼？保祿宗徒說：「我渴望求解脫而與基督同在一起：這實在是再好沒有了；...為使你們在信德上得到進展和喜樂，...同我在基督耶穌內更加歡躍。」(斐一：23-26)面對這段喜樂再加喜樂的經文，我們又是怎麼理解的呢？所以，我們在主內生活的人，對生與死的見解是與沒有聽過福音的人大不同的。我們的信德是超越經驗與歷史事實的，它是深入領會基督死而復活永生生命的奧跡。如果我們依據真理和信仰而生活，在這世上就已獲得了內心真正的喜悅和平安。



他們說，時間會癒合一切

◆李中權

「時間會癒合一切」。大家都相信這句話，但這句話從未在我身上實現。記憶會慢慢的褪色，然後你會為自己找到一個方法，試著來填補你所愛的人離去後遺留下來的悲傷與空虛。我不願稱此為癒合。失去摯愛者的痛，是永遠無法癒合的。

在我七歲生日前的七個月，我的哥哥因血癌過世。那時他才九歲。

我的哥哥中達(Robert)，對我的人生有很大的影響，雖然我們共同生活的時間，說起來應該算是很短。我還記得我穿著褐色條紋恤衫去參加他的葬禮。很多親友走過來要安慰我，但我在他的葬禮中，沒有落下一滴淚。我黯然失語，但並非不知傷痛。那時，我只是將這些事情掩埋了起來。

他臨終時，我在他的病床邊握著他的手，哀號著「阿爸，阿爸」，希望天父會聽到我的禱聲來挽救他。哥哥沒有反應，他不能說話，但我知道他聽得見。有滴淚珠從他的臉頰邊滑落，我知道哥哥聽到了我說的每一句話。我附在他的耳邊輕聲的說：「我愛你，Robert」。我緊捏著他的手，開始哭泣；我知道這將是我最後一次見到他。

與他在一起的每一刻時光，仍停留在我的腦海裏，彷如昨日事般的清晰。當醫生診斷出他得了血癌後，給他開了許多抑制癌症擴散的藥。我仍記得他的藥量——每天他都要吞下八粒藥丸，希望能藉此與癌症搏鬥。有次他在做完化療回

家時，身上繫了一個診斷監控器。一個傢伙看到他身上的監控器，就來霸凌他。我把那個混球推開，想要替我哥哥修理他。雖然哥哥知道我是爲了保護他，但他攔阻了我揍那少年。哥哥就是一個如此寬宏的人，他總是選擇正道而行。中達的心智與成熟，超過了他的實際年齡。中達是個奉派遣來到世間的天使，照亮了那些有幸與他相處的人。那時我們還抱著虛幻的期盼，等待有天他終會出院回家。全家人都是如此衷心的盼望，媽媽甚至將整間屋子的地毯都換新，等待著熱烈歡迎他的歸來。

但是天不如人願。

哥哥過世幾天後，我夢見了他。中達從小喜歡養魚。夢中他用很快的語調對我說話，囁哩咕嚕的聽不清楚。我清楚的看到他遞給我一個裝滿著金魚的塑膠袋。金魚在袋裏游來游去。第二天早晨，當我告訴媽媽這個夢時，她的眼眶湧出淚水。她告訴我，「魚」在我們的基督信仰中有特殊象徵的意義。我那時對此毫無概念，因此這些對我也沒有太大意義。現在我寫這篇文章時，卻淚流滿面。要知道，這些都是我心底的私事。一個男人要寫出他內心的感覺，是需要很大勇氣的。

我跟哥哥的一些共同記憶，現在仍在我的生命中扮演著重要角色。有一件至今仍影響我深遠的小事，就是哥哥教我要先三思而後言，因爲話一出口，就如覆水難收。真正要緊的就是這些生活中的小事。當我遇到困難時，我仍會在祈禱中跟他講話，因爲我知道他是一直看顧著我們全家的護守天使。

我很愛他，小時候，我總是很欽佩他。中達在每一方面

都比我強。他在學校的成績總是名列前茅，是老師與同學公認的聰明、規矩的好學生。哥哥很聽媽媽的話，非常尊敬她，從不會頂嘴。我呢，正好相反，總是被視為調皮搗蛋，惹事生非的小孩。

哥哥過世後，情況轉變了。

妹妹天愛出生後，我不再是家中唯一的孩子了。我非常愛她，願意為她做任何事。我們年齡差距很大，但我盡力試著去了解她每天過的情形如何。

我十歲時，爸爸因為嗜賭，與媽媽離異。他沉迷賭博無法自拔，終於撕裂了媽媽對他的愛情。我爹不是個壞人；只是他從未準備好要當個父親。他從未當過他兒子的良師益友；當我遇到一些母親無法回答的問題時，我找不到他來導引我。節慶、生日、或其它任何重要的家庭活動，爸爸總是缺席。一旦錯過了，這些時光的斷層就再也無法彌補。時間過了，就一去不返。我並不恨我的父親。我已到了那種只能兩手一攤，不再在乎的地步。那些本來應該是父親教導兒子的課程，我只能靠自己去摸索。我是在錯誤中學到我的人生課程。從好的方面來說，我自己學習到的教訓讓我感受更深刻，因為我必須親身體驗。我很無奈的成為家中唯一的男子。也許是因為在這麼小的年紀就要經歷這麼多的世事，使我比同儕早熟許多。我並不想要這樣，但是命運使然，我只能接受。

如果我的哥哥還健在，或是有一個年紀接近的人可以帶領我，我的成長路會平順很多。如果我有個哥哥，我的人生會非常的不同。我本來就不是當家中長兄的料。我也不堪做為家中唯一的男人。我原是一個愛惹事生非，不守規矩的小

弟。我總是我行我素，一意孤行。

十二歲時，我第一次在學校打架。不用說，我被罰停學三天。校規是不論誰的錯，或是誰挑釁，打架雙方都會被停學。十三歲時，我在學校多次鬥毆，也被多次停學。七年級時，我開始與一些狐群狗黨鬼混，更助長了我錯誤的心態。在生命旅途的這個階段，我缺乏一個父親或哥哥來幫助我走過這道路。我的學業成績一落千丈。我逃學只因為我不想去上課。我開始每天至少在彈子房流連六個小時，勤練撞球，來贏其他孩子的錢。年紀輕輕，我就很快的體認到金錢買不到快樂，但能幫你繼續過你習慣的生活。我看到母親經濟拮据，那時就決心要賺到足夠的錢，讓她不愁吃喝。我從不願向我媽要錢，因為我知道她這個單親媽媽養家不易。年紀大些後，我開始打工，也開始存錢。

學校課業為我而言並不太難，也許是因為我不用太費心就可及格過關。我沒打算要讀大學。高中畢業前的幾個月，同學們都在興高采烈的討論要去那所大學讀書，也讓我興起要申請更高學府的念頭。因為我的成績太差，所有申請的大學都把我拒之門外。我知道自己不笨，只是我高中時太不在乎，也沒盡力。有一所我申請的大學回函說，如果我有兩封師長推薦函，並且寫一篇散文說明為何我想要進入這個學校，他們就會錄取我。我達成了他們的要求，我也進了大學！

沒人強迫我進大學；我是為了自己做的。我終於體會到，中達一定會希望我完成學業，因為這是我要成功的先決條件。

我這時有了不同的心態。大學是需要自己付費的高等教

育，因此翹課絕不是明智之舉。我也發現，好的學業成績會讓人看重你，能幫助你找到一份好工作，是進入職場的敲門磚。我這時曉得爲何高中時，同學們都努力的要爭取好成績。因爲我的目標是要賺錢，也知道了學業成績的功效，我有了爭取最高分的動力。我在大學的前兩年，各科成績全部甲等，並榮獲了著名的「校長獎」。大二後，我申請轉學到另一所我主修科系排名較佳的大學。

大學時，我仍一心想要賺錢，謀求自立。其實我一直喜歡這樣按自己的方法行事。我不像以前那樣狂野墮落。我仍然貪玩，但我學會比較節制。我知道你可以盡情的玩，但要搞清楚事情的輕重緩急。該做的事一定要做好，但如果你不能掌握事情的優先順序，你就該放棄玩樂。那時我有件很自得的事，就是我在 18 歲時，存夠了一萬五千美元送給媽媽。我相信哥哥也會以我爲榮。媽媽很訝異我能存到這麼多錢，並且會把這些錢給她。媽媽是我生命的一切。她總是陪伴著我，縱使在我闖禍肇事時，她仍不棄不離。我永遠也無法回報她。金錢畢竟只是金錢。它只能幫助我們日常的生活費用。雖然我給了她這些錢，但我知道，她還是只會把這些錢用在這個家上。

十九歲時，我的人生又經歷了另一個悲劇。這個悲劇重創了我靈魂的最深處。一位與我非常親密的友人過世了。她原是我最好的朋友，後來我們不只是普通朋友。她是我靈魂的另一半，她能夠幫我說完我沒講完的話，她只要看我面容就知道我的心思。下面是我爲她寫的悼文。沒有人應該在他所愛的人這麼年輕時就寫悼文。她年方二十歲，名字是 Nina Sun Kim。

Nina Sun Kim ... 妳是我最要好的朋友，我的愛人，以及介於之間的一切。能認識妳，甚且為妳所愛，是一個恩賜。Nina，妳對待每一個人，包括那些非常不堪的人，都如此寬容。妳是我所認識的最真誠的人。當我聽到這個悲劇時，我憤怒咆哮。我相信沒人願意承認這是個事實，這不過是有人在開一個非常惡劣的玩笑罷了。最後，我終於承認了這個事實，終於要面對它。不管多少個夜晚我希望再見妳一面，再跟妳說一次話，但我知道那都不會成真。事情就是這樣突然的發生，一個最好的人，從所有愛她的人中被奪走。

「天主對我們每個人都有祂的計劃」，我的朋友一直想要如此說服我，但我說祂太貪心了。雖然我這樣說很自私，但我相信天主自己想要保留著所有最好的，這是為何妳會被帶走。我愛天主，我相信天主，但是失去了我的另一半是我無法忍受的悲痛。每個人都告訴我，妳到了更美好的地方，我也相信他們所說。我相信，只是因為我自己從妳那兒得到了保證。但為何我仍一直幻夢著我與你還有更多的時光可以在一起？我們有這麼多長遠的夢，這麼多目標要追尋。我們希望將來能有安樂的生活，讓我們的家人可以退休安養。沒有妳，我實已成了殘缺不足的人。妳最了解我的自私，知道我想要獨自完全的擁有妳。我不斷的期望，但我知道我的期望不會實現。現在我們所能做的，唯有祈禱。

我不知道為何，但從我們相遇的那一刻開始，就成為最要好的朋友，沒人可以把我們分開。過去的四年中，我們珍惜每一刻能夠相處的時光，只因為我們在一起時，彼此覺得如此舒坦、自在。每當我們分開時，我們又渴望、想念彼此。妳改變了我，Nina Sun Kim。沒有妳，我不可能成為今日的我。妳帶給了我們所有朋友，甚至剛認識妳的人許多喜悅。每個人都知道妳是最甜美的可人兒。妳是這麼美麗。

妳很少化妝，但是妳化妝後，哇…好像所有人的目光都集中在妳的身上。

只要講到妳的過世，就會讓我柔腸寸斷。這是不應該發生的事。如果我有任何方法阻止這事的發生，妳知道我寧可以我的性命來交換。最可悲的是，無論誰都絕對、絕對無法改變這事實。這是為什麼我們不需悲傷，但要在我們的生活中，活出她的夢想。替她達成。這個屋內沒有人願意讓她毫無價值的死去。讓我們慶祝並頌揚她的生命，因為她是一位來到塵世的天使，我們只短暫的認識了她。

在一個星期日的早晨，Nina 在一場車禍中當場喪命。她過世前的十二小時，我還跟她說過話。那時我的心中充滿了混雜的情緒。我憤怒、悲傷、懊惱，並且萬分、萬分的怨恨。我聲嘶力竭的向天主咆哮：「為什麼？為什麼你要讓我失去生命中最重要的一切？」我在屋內像發狂了一般。沒有其他人在家。屋內的東西都被我砸碎，我開始狂飲。自殺的念頭閃過我的心中。但我知道我必需堅強的活下去，因為她不會願意看到我自殺。我的哥哥也不會願意看到我自殺。

再一次，我感到同樣的孤獨與空虛。沒有人真正的聆聽我的情緒。我也不願煩擾別人。

她出事後的第二天，我去告訴每門課的教授，我這學期不會再來上課了。大多數的教授可以從外表看出我遭遇了一些悲劇，但他們沒有問我。我從不缺課。上課時我積極參與討論。教授們都叫得出我的名字，知道我是個認真的學生。雖然我通知他們的很倉促，教授們仍是幫我安排提早考試，讓我能有成績，可以拿到學分。

每個晚上，我總是淚流滿面的躑躅繞圈。那個夜晚，我躺在床上時，仍不斷哭泣的請求天主：「請禱只要讓我知道她現在已到了平安的地方就好。」我閉上雙眼，但我仍然十分清醒。這時有道亮光充滿了我的一隻眼，然後又射到另一隻眼。我的腦海呈現出一個影像。一個靜止的影像。影像中有兩扇敞開的大門。我看到一位銀髮的老者以左手執著Nina的右手走向大門。Nina從右側轉面對我微笑。有幾個穿著白袍的小孩，圍繞著他們兩人歡躍。

那是在我心中永遠不會忘卻的影像。

獨自躺在床上，我哭的更厲害，但這時我流的是喜悅的眼淚。也許這事聽起來像是陳腔濫調，並且可笑，但我知道那晚我所看到的與沉浸其中的感覺，是什麼意義。

Nina過世後，我把自己封閉了幾個月。朋友們會到家裏來探望我。他們會帶我出去吃飯，並且想盡辦法要讓我跨出家門。但我只想要單獨過一陣子。有些夜晚，我會到她出事的地方，獨自坐在那裏，想像這些事情發生的情景。然後我就開始祈禱、痛哭。

我仍然愛她，只是我不能再與她相愛。

我必需慢慢的不再做一個貪玩的野孩子。我必需達到某些標準。這些標準是我要為哥哥及Nina達成的目標。這些是我最要好的朋友對我的期望。

二十一歲時，我以榮譽學生畢業。現在我努力的存錢，預備回到學校深造。我的新目標是要拿到財務碩士學位，進入一流的金融機構就業。

我的妹妹天愛，比我小八歲，是家中的老么。她永遠會是我心愛的小妹妹。天主是藉著她賜給我祝福。我要做她的好榜樣，教導她所有正確的道路，盡我所能的幫助她。

我要是一直活在「如果…就…」之中，我就永遠不會達到我現在的成就。中達一直照顧著我們家庭。有時我覺得所有這些事情的發生都是巧合，但是就因為是如此的巧合，讓我從心底感到這是一個更高的主宰在我生命中行使的力量。

我現在充實的過著生命的每一刻鐘，不要造成任何遺憾。昨日已逝，明日未知。今日呢？今日是個恩賜。這是為何我們稱之為當下。

現在我已二十三歲，對哥哥的模糊記憶以及對我最要好的朋友的思念，仍免不了常在我腦海中盤旋激盪。這些已成了生命中對我影響最大、也是最具深義的事件了。

我的生命經歷過了顛沛起伏。我曾經走到谷底，但我知道我必須堅持下去。為了妹妹，我別無選擇；我一定要成功，給她做一個好榜樣。自暴自棄只是在浪費生命。我知道如果中達或 Nina 可以選擇的話，他們一定會選擇活在世上。我必需完成他們的夢想。

無論如何，我必須保持理智，繼續前行。

路加福音 第十章第十 - 十四節
我來，卻是為叫他們獲得生命，且獲得更豐富的生命。善牧為羊捨掉自己的性命。我是善牧，我認識我的羊，我的羊也認識我



They Say Time Heals Everything

◆ Marvin Li

“Time heals everything”. Contrary to popular belief, this saying never held true for me. Memories slowly fade and you find your own way to try to patch up the sorrow and emptiness that was left behind from losing a person close to you. I wouldn’t call this healing. The agony of losing someone can never be healed.

It was seven months away from my seventh birthday when my brother, at the age of nine, passed away from leukemia.

My brother, Robert, played a large impact on my life even though the time frame I spent with him was relatively brief. I even remember the brown stripped T-shirt I wore to his funeral. There were friends and family coming up to me to try and cheer me up, but I didn’t even shed a tear at his funeral. I was lost for words but not clueless. I made my peace with what had happened at the time.

I even remember Robert on his death bed. I held his hand and screamed “Appa Appa”, in regards to Christ, hoping he would hear my prayer to save my brother. My brother could not respond, he could not talk, but I knew he could hear me. A tear drop slid from the side of his face and I knew my brother could hear everything I was saying to him. I whispered in his ear, “I love you Robert”. I squeezed his hand and I began to start crying, knowing in the back of my mind that this would be the last time I would see him.

I can still remember all the times we spent together like it was yesterday. When he was diagnosed with leukemia he was prescribed medicine to slow down the spread of the cancer. I even recall the amount of pills, all eight of them, that he would have to take on a daily basis to supposedly help fight his cancer. I even remember the time he came home after a session of che-

motherapy with a monitor attached to his body and a bully was picking on him because of the monitor that was attached to him. I pushed that bully and tried to beat him up on my older brother's behalf. Even though my brother knew I was trying to protect him he stopped me from beating up that kid. My brother was always the bigger person and he would always take the high road. Robert was wiser and far more mature than his age. Robert was an angel sent to this planet to shed light on the few who had the pleasure to come in contact with him. I even remember the false hope that we had around the house thinking that my brother would come home one day. The family being so hopeful; my mother had the entire house newly carpeted for a warm welcoming for Robert.

It was not meant to be.

A few days after he passed away I had a dream about him. Robert always had a love for fish. During the dream I remember he was speaking to me at a very fast pace. It sounded like gibberish to me. The main thing that stood out to me was Robert handing me a plastic bag filled with goldfish. The entire bag must have been filled with goldfish swimming around. The next morning I told my mother about this dream. She started to tear up. She told me that there was a symbolic meaning in the Catholic religion for fish. I had no idea at the time and it did not make all that much sense to me.

As I tear up writing this letter, remember, this is very personal to me. It takes a lot for a man to write about his feelings.

Some of the memories my brother and I shared still plays a role in my life now. One small thing that plays a large factor for me today would be that he taught me to think before I speak. After it is said, it can never be taken back since it has already been spoken. It is the little things in life that really matters. I still talk to him through my prayers at times of hardship knowing that he will always be watching over my family as a guardian angel. Some events that occurred in my life come at such an accurate and precise incident that it would be labeled improperly as a coin-

cidence. There has to be a supernatural force, a higher being that would make such events so precise.

I loved him very much, and I always looked up to him when I was growing up. Robert was always better than me in every way. He made straight A's and was regarded in school as the smart obedient student by the teachers and his peers. My brother would always listen to my mother without any back talk and was always very respectful. I, on the other hand, was always regarded as the kid who loved to have fun and push the rules to their limits.

Things changed after my brother passed away.

My sister, Rebecca, was then born so I wouldn't be an only child. I love her very much and I would do anything for her. We have a lot of years in between us, but I try my best to try to understand what she is going through on a day to day basis.

My parents divorced when I was ten years old due to my father's addiction to gambling. His addiction for gambling became the reason that tore my mother's love for him apart. My father isn't a bad man; he just wasn't ever ready to become a father. He was never there as a mentor, as someone I could talk to whenever I would have questions that my mother couldn't answer. Holidays, birthdays, and significant occasions were all missed by my father. There is a time gap that cannot be filled after it is missed. Once the time is gone, it is gone forever. I do not hate my father. It comes to a point where I just kind of threw my hands up and didn't care anymore. The lessons that were supposed to be from father to son were learned on my own. The mentoring factor of life lessons were learned through my own mistakes. In a sense, I guess these lessons learned on my own stuck to me a lot more because I had to do it myself. It didn't make much sense to me that I was the only man of the household. This was probably why I was exposed to so many different aspects of life at such a young age which made me mature a lot faster than my peers. I never asked for this. Fate led me here and I just took what was given to me.

Life would have been easier growing up if I had my brother around or someone at a closer age to me giving me advice. Life would be different with an older brother. I was never made to be the older brother of the family. I was never made to be the man of the household. I was the younger brother who always got in trouble who really didn't care much about the rules. I did it my way, whichever way I found suitable at the time.

When I was twelve I got into my first fist fight in school. Needless to say, I got suspended from school for three days. It didn't matter whose fault it was or who started the argument, both parties were suspended. At the age of thirteen I got into multiple fist fights in school and got suspended multiple times. I was in seventh grade and I started to hang out with the wrong crowd, which helped me develop the wrong attitude. At this point of my life, I had no father figure or older brother to help me walk through this path. I started to slack academically in school. I skipped school just because I did not feel like going. I started to hang out at a pool hall for at least six hours a day every day of the week to get better in pool and hustle other kids for their money. At a young age I quickly realized that money couldn't buy you happiness, but it could help you support your everyday living habits. I saw that my mother was financially struggling that is why I was determined at such a young age to make enough money that I wouldn't ever have to worry about it. I never liked to ask for money from my mother because I knew she was having a hard enough time on her own to support a family as a single mother. As I grew older, I started to work and I also started to save up my own money.

School didn't come hard to me, probably because I didn't try and I could still meet the minimum requirements to pass the course. I didn't have plans to go to college. A few months before I was going to graduate high school, the overwhelming chatter from my peers about which college they were going to attend made me apply for a higher education. I did not get accepted into any of the colleges I applied for because of my grade point average. I knew I was smart, but I just didn't care and didn't try in

high school. One of the universities I applied for stated they would accept me into their academic program if I got two letters of recommendations and if I wrote an essay stating why I would like to attend their university. I got these recruitments filled and off to college I went!

Nobody forced me to go to college; I did it for my own sake. I finally came into realization that Robert would want me to succeed in academics and that is what it took for me to succeed in life.

I had a different mindset now. College was a higher education that you have to pay for with your own money so skipping school was no longer an option. I also made the correlation that making good grades will get you recognized and hopefully land you a good job to jump start your career. It finally made sense to me why the kids in high school were trying so hard to make good grades. With my money hunger and finally realizing the reason for getting outstanding grades, I was motivated to get the highest grades possible. My first two years in college I maintained a 4.0/4.0 grade point average. I was a straight A student and made it on the prestigious list of academic students known as the “President’s List”. I applied to transfer to a different university in my second year of college, a university with a better academic program in the field I was studying.

During college I was still in love with making money and I was still motivated to be self efficient. In a sense I always like to do things my way. I was no longer as wild and bad as I was growing up. I still liked to have fun, but I figured out how to do it more discretely. You can have as much fun as you want, but just make sure you have your priorities in order. Responsibilities still need to be accomplished, but once you blur your priorities, those are the times when you have to give up having fun. One of my most proud moments that I had at that age was me giving my mother \$15,000 at the age of 18. I’m sure my brother would have been proud. She was in shock on how I got so much money saved up and why I would be giving it to her. My mother is my flesh and blood. She has always been there for me even when I

was a mischief. There is nothing I can ever do to repay her back. The money in the end is just money. It is just there to help sustain our everyday living expenses. Even though I gave her that money, I knew that she would end up spending it on the family.

At the age of 19 another tragedy took place in my life. A tragedy that occurred that hit me to the core of my soul. Someone very close to me passed away. She was my best friend from an entire year and then we came more than friends. She was my second half, a person who could finish my sentences for me and know my thought process just by my facial expression. Below is the eulogy I wrote for her. Nobody should ever have to write a eulogy for someone they care about that passes away at such a young age. She was twenty years old and her name was Nina Sun Kim.

Nina Sun Kim....you are my best friend, my love, and everything in between. It is a blessing to have gotten to know you and better yet to be loved by you. Nina you had so much patience with everyone even when they didn't deserve it. You are the most sincere person that anyone would ever know. I was in rage when I first heard of the tragedy. I believe we all felt that it was unreal, that someone was trying to joke on such a sick subject. Then when I finally realized that it was true, it finally sunk in. No matter how many times through the night I wish that I could see you one last time and speak to you I know it wouldn't come true. It just happened so sudden that the best person anyone could encounter would be taken away from their love ones. "God has a plan for all of us", so all my peers keep trying to persuade me with, but I call him greedy. It's self-fish of me to say, but I believe that God wants the best to himself that is why you were taken away. I love God and I believe in him, it is just so much agony in losing my other half. Everyone keeps telling me that you're in a better place and I believe them. I only believed because I got reassurance from you myself. But why do I also keep dreaming and fantasizing that I would have more time with you. We had so many long term dreams, so many goals to succeed. We wanted to be living the good life, to put our families into retire-

ment and allow them to relax. I literally feel incomplete without you. You know best that I am self-fish, and I would want to keep you all to myself. I just keep wishing, but I know my wishes won't be fulfilled. All we can do now is pray.

I don't know why, but the moment we met each other we became best of friends, nobody could pry us apart. For the past four years, we spent every possible moment together just because we felt so comfortable and free with one another. The moments when we were apart we would crave for each other, we would feen for one another. You changed me Nina Sun Kim. Without you I would not be the person that I am today. You have shed so much light to all of our peers and people who barely have gone in contact with you. Everyone knows that you are the sweetest apple of the crop. You are so beautiful. You rarely wore make up, but when you did, wow.....it really felt like all eyes were on you.

It tears me apart even speaking about your death. It wasn't supposed to happen. If there were any way that I could prevent it, you know that I would commit my life in changing what has happened. The horrible part is that there is nothing, nothing that anyone could do. This is why we need not to be in grief but to live her dreams through our lives. To succeed for her. Nobody in this entire room dare to let her death be in vein. Celebrate and honor her life as the angel on earth that we barely got to experience.

Nina died instantly at the scene of the car accident, on a Sunday morning. I had just spoken with her twelve hours before she passed away. Mixture of emotions filled my body. I was angry, upset, enraged, and very most very hateful. I was screaming at the top of my lungs asking God, "Why? Why would you let the most significant thing that happened in my life be taken away?" I went on a rampage around my house. Nobody was home. Items in the house were broken, I started to binge drink. Suicidal thoughts went through my brain. I knew I had to carry on because she wouldn't want me to kill myself. My brother wouldn't want me to kill myself.

Once again I felt the very same feeling of being alone and

empty. Nobody was there to truly listen to all of my emotions at the time. I didn't want to be a bother.

The day after her accident I went to my professors to tell them that I would no longer be present in class for the rest of the semester. Most professors could tell by my body expression that something tragic happened, and they did not ask what it was. I was always present in class. I was the student who was active and participating in the daily lectures. My professors knew me by name and knew I was a good student. With the short time period I gave them, the professors worked with me to schedule all my examinations to get the grades I needed to receive credit for the courses.

That same night I was still always walking around with tears flowing from my eyes. As I lay in bed that night I kept crying; asking God, "Please just let me know that she's safe". I closed my eyes, and knowing that I was still awake a flash of light filled one of my eyes and shot across to the other. An image occurred in my mind. It was picture still. In this image, two gates were fully opened up. I saw an old man with gray hair holding Nina's right hand with his left hand walking toward the gates. Nina had her head turned around over her right shoulder at me, smiling. There were little kids in a skipping motion around both of them all dressed in white robes.

It is a picture in my mind that will always be remembered.

I started to cry even more, lying in my bed alone, but now the tears were of happiness. I know it sounds very cliché and ironic, but I know what I saw that night along with the feelings that engulfed me.

I shut myself out from the rest of the world for a few months after Nina passed away. Some of my friends would come to the house to see how I was doing. They would take me out to eat and do whatever they could to try to get me out of the house. I just needed time to myself. There would be nights when I went to the place of her accident and just sit there by myself imagining how it

all happened. I would begin to pray and to cry.

I still love her. I'm just no longer in love with her.

I had to slowly fade from being the wild kid who was always in search of a good time. There were standards that I had to fill. These standards were goals that I have to accomplish on behalf of my brother and Nina. There were expectations that my best friend had for me.

I graduated with honors at the age of 21 and am now currently in the work force saving up more money to get ready to go back to school. A new goal for me is to finish my master's degree in finance and land a career in a top financial firm.

My sister, Rebecca, who has eight years of difference between me, is the baby of the family. She will always be my little sister to me. She is my blessing in disguise. I want to be the good role model and teach her everything the correct way, to help her any way I can.

If my life was always lived in the "what if's" I would never have accomplished what I have done. Robert is always looking over my family. Sometimes it feels like the events that happened could be just coincidence but it gets to a point where it is so accurate and precise that you have a gut feeling that some other supernatural force is playing its role in my life.

I live every moment of my life with no regrets and I live it to its fullest. Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. And today? Today is a gift. That is why we call it the present.

Currently, I am 23 and I try very hard to live out the vague memories I have of my brother and my best friend through my head over again. It comes to a point where it becomes the highlights and significances that they had impacted my life.

I have gone through this emotional rollercoaster called life. I have been at the very lows, but I know I have to keep carrying on.

Being successful and a good role model for my sister are the only options for me. Giving up would be a waste of a life. I know if Robert or Nina had a choice they would still be here. I have to fulfill their dreams through me.

In the end, I just have to keep calm and carry on.



我在天堂的哥哥

◆李天愛

我從來沒有機會見到我的哥哥李中達。我從來沒法給他一個擁抱，或是向他說一句話。我只能從別人的口中聽到他的故事與別人對他的記憶，但是我仍然覺得，他總是在我身邊，就像一個大哥哥一樣的保護我。我知道天主一直護佑著我的家庭，我很感謝祂賜給我們中達哥哥。雖然我從未聽過他的聲音，從未碰觸過他，從未看過他，但我常常對他講話。當我遇到困難，沒有人可以傾訴時，他總是在那裏聆聽。

記得在小學一年級時，有次在學校玩抽獎遊戲。我很想要獎品中的一個背包。台上所有的東西，我的目光就只盯住那背包；那時候的我，似乎全天下的東西我似乎只在乎這個。我開始祈禱，請中達向天主說，幫我抽中那個背包。一位老師從抽獎箱中拿出一張卡片，上面是我的名字。我好感謝天主。我真高興有一個人在天國看顧著我。從那天我抽到背包開始，每當我碰到困難，或沒有人跟我講話時，我就會跟中達說話。有的人有想像的朋友；我有一個在天堂的哥

哥，一個真實的哥哥。

我常常不禁自問，如果他還在世上，我的生活會是怎樣。如果我有另一個像 Marvin（中權）一樣，總是照顧我，愛護我的哥哥，那該有多好！我們沒有共同的回憶，我們從沒有一起做過任何事；每當想到這些，我就感到很遺憾從未見過中達。當我跟中權哥哥吵架時，我希望能夠跑到中達身邊去訴苦。我希望有另一個人可以安慰我，跟我站在同一邊。這種時候我就會懊惱，為何我只有一個哥哥在世上。雖然如此，我仍是十分感恩與高興，至少我仍有中權哥哥可以依靠，可以愛我。他也許不是完美的哥哥，但是至少他是我擁有的一個哥哥。畢竟，血濃於水。

每次當有人告訴我，我跟中達長像或行動有多相似，我就更想念他。我知道，他像是我們家的護守天使，一直看顧著我們。我甚至要為我的存在，感謝他及天主。中達過世後，我媽媽每天下班後就到教堂向天主祈求一個女兒，來代替中達。天主將我恩賜給我媽媽，因此我覺得我的使命就是要像中達一樣照顧媽媽。我是在 9 月 16 日出生，中達是在 9 歲時，1 月 6 日過世。我的生日不但我牢牢記住，每一天都要好好照顧媽媽，也提醒我，我的存在是多麼大的恩寵。

我是多麼的愛我媽媽，也多麼的感謝她。我無法想像當他們得知中達得了血癌時，是多麼痛苦。我媽是我最親密的朋友，也是我心中的英雄。她經歷了這麼多艱辛，卻屹立不搖。媽媽現在把所有會讓她想起中達的東西都藏起來。我記得很小的時候，有次我在亂翻一大堆照片時，看到一本全是中達像片的相簿。我十分得意自己的發現，就趕快跑去向媽媽獻寶。她向我解釋這是我在天國的另一個哥哥時，淚水已

滑滑而下。好哭鬼的我，也跟著哭，因為我不知道要如何讓媽媽不要哭。即使到現在，當媽媽的壓力太大時，我仍會從門縫間偷窺到她捧著一些中達的遺物，傷心的痛哭。我知道媽媽爲了我們，非常努力的要保持堅強；堅強到甚至不願在我們的面前流淚。

我知道中達總是爲了媽媽保持他的堅強，雖然他要打那麼多的針，吃那麼多的藥，他也從不叫苦。中達哥哥是我心目中最好的榜樣，我要像他一樣，爲了媽媽而堅強。他真是一個天使，他是天主對我們家的祝福。謝謝你，哥哥，你總是看顧我、保護我、疼愛我。我要讓你知道，我也愛你，我會一直好好照顧媽媽。我真希望能見到你。如果我有另外一個哥哥在世上，那該有多好？但是，也許在天國有個哥哥更好吧。我夢想我也能告訴別人我們相處的記憶，向別人描述你。我夢想只要能夠看到你一次也好。我夢想很多事，雖然我知道這都不可能發生。但我確實知道一件事：那就是，你是個天使；一個愛我，總是陪伴著我的天使，雖然我看不見你。



My Brother In Heaven

◆Rebecca Li

I was never given the opportunity to have met my brother Robert Li. I was never able to give him a hug, or even say a word to him. All I know about him is the stories and memories other people have told me, but yet I still feel like he is always present, guarding me like a big brother should. I know that God always protects over my family and I'm so glad that He sent Robert to us. Although I have never heard his voice, never felt his touch, never seen him, he is someone I talk to all the time. Whenever something hard comes up and I have no one to talk to he is always there to listen.

I remember in first grade our school had a raffle, and I really wanted this backpack that was up there. Nothing else stood out to me other than that backpack, and at that time it seemed to be the thing that I wanted the most in the world. I started to pray, and I asked Robert to ask God to help me get that backpack. One teacher reached into the raffle box and pulled out a card and it had my name on it. I was so thankful to God and I was really happy that I had someone up in heaven that is watching over me. I won the backpack that day, and ever since I have been talking to Robert whenever something challenging came up or whenever I had no one to talk to. Some people have imaginary friends; I have a brother in Heaven, and he's real.

I can't help it but to always ask how my life would be if he was still here. If I was lucky enough to have another brother to always watch over me and to love me as much as Marvin does. All the memories we never made, all the experiences we never had together gives me a sense of regret about never meeting Robert. Whenever I get into an argument with Marvin, I wish I could run to Robert and complain. I wish that there was someone else there to comfort me and to side with me. Its times like those that make me ask why I only have one other sibling here on earth. But even so, I'm still so thankful and glad that I at least have

Marvin to lean on and to love. He may not be the perfect brother, but at least he is one of my brothers that I have. After all, blood is thicker than water.

Every time someone tells me how much I look like him or act like him I miss him even more. I know he is like my family's guardian angel, watching over us always. I'm even thankful to him and God for my existence. My mom went to church every day after work to pray for a baby girl, in place of Robert. God gave my mom me, and I feel like it's my mission to care for my mom like Robert did. I was born on 9/16 and Robert passed away when he was 9 on 1/6. My birthday is a constant reminder to me to take care of my mom each and every day, and also how much of a blessing it is for me to be here.

I love my mom so much and I'm so thankful for her. I can't even begin to imagine the pain she went through when they discovered that Robert had leukemia. My mom is my best friend and my hero, she went through so much but she persevered through it all. Now my mom hides almost everything that reminds her of Robert. I remember when I was really little and I started flipping through a bunch of pictures and I came across a photo album full of pictures of Robert. Excited about what I had discovered I quickly ran to my mom and showed her. She explained to me how that was my other brother in heaven and then tears started running down her face. Being the big crybaby that I am, I started to cry too, because I didn't know what I could do to stop my mom from crying. Even now, when my mom is super stressed I can peek through the closet and see her holding something of Roberts and crying her eyes out. I know my mom tries so hard to stay strong for us, to the point where she won't even want to really cry in front of us.

I know that Robert has always stayed strong for my mom, he never complained even when he had to get so many shots and take so many pills. To me, Robert is the biggest role model and I want to stay strong for my mom as he did. He is truly an angel that our family was blessed to have, so thank you gege for always watching over me, protecting me, and loving me. I want you to

know that I love you too, and I will always take care of mom. I really wish that I could've met you. If only I had another big brother here on earth, but I guess having one in heaven is even better. I wish that I could've been the one telling other people about our memories together, and about how you were like. I wish I could've seen you just once. I hope for a lot of things, but I know that it's never going to happen. One thing that I know for sure though, is that you are an angel; one that loves me and is always there, even if I can't see you.



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我的小表弟

◆Wendy Garza

我不要！我不要去參加那個告別式，因為那只會證明中達已經離開的事實。我不要去向那個曾經抱在我手中，幾乎有我自己個子一半大的寶寶說再見。我不要去向那個我常陪他玩躲貓貓，讓他別再哭的小傢伙說再見。我不要去向那個跟我在家庭聚會時一起表演魔術的搭檔說再見。我拒絕向自己承認他已走了，希望如此能把那種心痛鎖在門外。那時我確實是處在否認現實的心態。我盡力的要讓自己分心去想些其他事，好把我的情緒塞到看不見的角落，但不論我想用什麼來取代我心中的悲傷，頃刻之間，哀愁就把我微弱的思緒吞噬，又把我捲回到悲痛之中。我希望我能趕快從這夢魘醒來，看到我的小表弟安然無恙，他還是坐在我家的地上，頑皮地把我們剛花了幾個鐘頭才搭起來的樂高(Lego) 紙打散，或是坐在小桌邊畫彩虹與小兔兔。

但是不行就是不行。

每隔一陣子，我就會抓起電話，打給我的弟弟，劈頭就說：「嗨，馬可，記不記得那時候，中達…」，或是「還有，當中達在做…」。然後我們就在電話中沉默的笑笑，開始追憶那個我們有幸與他一起成長的可愛小天使。他總是如此溫和、善良，在他沒發病之前就是這樣。他的聰穎總是超過他的小小年紀。我好喜愛他；我們每個人都好喜愛他。

當我第一次要當這個小表弟的臨時褓姆時，我簡直無法相信，他們會讓我負責照顧一個這麼小，這麼可愛，這麼乖巧的孩子。我覺得他是全世界最珍貴的。雖然我的同學們也

都有與他差不多年齡的弟弟或堂表弟，但我總是以我們的小中中為榮。我真的覺得他是世界上最完美的小東西，不久後，我跟朋友間的話題總是不離我的小表弟。我想我真的講太多關於他的事了，我的朋友們剛開始只是取笑我，到後來她們都不想再聽我講他的事了。有一天在學校吃午餐時，我又嘮嘮叨叨的講了半天我看顧小表弟的事。一位朋友問我，我有沒有單獨做過任何事，沒有帶著我的小表弟？嗯…好吧，我承認，也許沒有。

中達很快的就變成我們家的常客。在他會走路之前，我們就常看顧他，陪他玩，看著他長大。到他能夠自己到處走時，每天晚餐後他的固定節目就是，逼著他媽媽帶他過街到對門的我們家來玩。大人們坐在那裏聊天時，我們就吱吱喳喳的玩鬧在一起。

中達總是會帶一些剛拿到的小玩意或玩具來秀給我們看；但他有個習慣，會把這些小東西放在屋裏的某個縫隙或角落裏，然後就忘掉了。因此那時在我們家裏，到處都會不經意的發現一些小玩意，讓我們想到這個小表弟，然後會心的一笑。做為表哥、表姐，我們當然不會就這樣輕易的饒了他。有一年他的生日，我們把他掉在我家的舊玩具都當成禮物包裝起來。當他把這個大禮物盒子打開，看到自己的舊玩具時，他可愛的小臉上，頓時呈現出驚訝與失望混雜的表情。可憐的小傢伙，我們只是因為喜愛他，才這樣逗他。在這個玩笑的「震撼」過後，我們給了他真正的禮物。為他慶生總是讓人感覺很好。他對收到的每一件禮物，都非常感激。我也記得他真的很聰明，他老是有辦法套出他媽媽的話，讓她透露出要送他的是什麼禮物。

因為中達在家裏只是說中文，所以在年齡可以去上幼

稚園前，他先上了托兒所的暑期班，去學講英語。我最快樂的一段記憶就是，每天下午去把上了半天課的中達接回家；那是我的暑期工作。這可是個重大的責任；我們家人信任我，讓我照顧小表弟，這是我的榮耀。那時我還太小，不能開車，但是我有一輛自行車。每天他就坐在我自行車的橫樁上，我載他穿過兩個巷子回家。我們兩個都很喜歡這樣。我會儘量的加速踩踏，讓我們感到風吹起頭髮。我知道他坐的一定不是很舒服，所以我會盡量避開高低不平的路邊與坑窪，但是他從沒抱怨過坐得痛了或累了，臉上總是保持著笑容。能夠從學校坐腳踏車回家，不用走路，他就心存感謝。他就是這樣，一個乖巧的孩子。

就在那一年稍後，我記得坐在范迪阿姨家的客廳時，聽到一陣騷動，抬頭看到我的阿姨們及姨丈從前門衝進來，還牽著中達。他們的臉上寫著恐懼、忿恨、與悲傷。我的心立即下沉，我直覺的感到發生了什麼嚴重事故，我嚇得六神無主。這真是難以想像。頃刻間，我們全家人的生活都被永遠改變了。從那時候開始，每個主日我都跟著外婆及阿姨們去她們平常去的教堂望彌撒。我開始不斷的向天主說話，向他祈禱並討價還價，請他將我們的小天使留在塵世，與我們在一起。有時候我會熬夜，為了要儘量多念幾串玫瑰經，希望天主會聽到我的禱聲，拯救中達。我想如果我能祈禱到夠多的次數，中達就會奇蹟式的得救。

但是不行就是不行。

難以置信的是，雖然他已離去了這麼久，他遺留下來的東西，與他的善良仍然常常圍繞著我們。還有那裏比天堂更適合一個熱愛耶穌的天使呢？知道他在天上為我們祈求，俯

視著我們，這是多美好的事？每當我痛苦的時候，我想到他。每當我想要怨天尤人的時候，我想到他曾經每天飽受煎熬而沒有怨言。當我面臨似乎無法克服的困境時，我想到他。現在初爲人母，我則想到我的范迪阿姨。

沒當媽前，我只能從我自己身處的優越環境來看中達的困境。現在我再回想他生命的那些年，我無法想像范迪阿姨是忍受了怎樣的苦楚。我無法想像當她第一次聽到「你的孩子得了癌症」時，是如何的肝腸寸斷；在那最後必需放手讓他離去的時刻，又是怎樣的悲痛。我將心比心，即使只是片刻將自己想像成她，都會讓我痛苦萬分。每當我想到這時，我都必須強迫自己不能再想，否則我將會被湧起的悲痛淹沒。

在選擇面對悲痛的人生態度上，她可以很容易的讓悲痛吞噬她，自艾自怨的過完餘生。沒有人會忍心責備她，因爲她必需承受一個沒有任何父母能夠忍受的創傷。但她選擇了溫良的途徑。她將全部的愛傾注在她的次子中權身上，後來天主又賜給她另一個美麗的女兒，天愛。她沒有讓中達的生命毫無意義的消逝。

做爲一個母親，你會對孩子付出毫無保留的愛。但非要到你自己成爲母親，從自己的血肉生出了一個新生命的那一刻，你是無法體會的。這種愛與親密的堅韌，沒有任何事物堪與比擬。我必須承認，在 Mateo 出生以後，偶爾我會亂想，如果他發生了任何意外，我會如何面對。我看著我美麗的寶寶，祈求我能保護他不要受到傷害，導引他走上正途。等他長大能夠了解時，我會對他講述這個小表舅的故事，讓他從中學習堅強、勇敢、與信德。

有人說時間會癒合所有的創傷，但那時候我看不到這痛苦的盡頭。中達觸動了許多人，放眼望去，我週遭的每一個親人都在痛苦的面對這個心底的傷口。生活終於重回軌道，淚水漸漸的被無盡的思念所取代，懷念著中達的慷慨大方與溫和的個性。現在，十六年過去了。有時走在路上或在商場，我會看到一些小孩，像中達如果還在世上現在的年齡。我會想，他現在會做什麼呢？他會去那所大學讀書？他會長得什麼樣子？有時當我想到他，淚水不禁湧上，喉頭開始哽咽。這時候，我會拉開床頭櫃的抽屜，拿出他以前掉在我們家的一個小玩具，會心的一笑，因為我知道他在天堂，正俯視著我們。



My Little Cousin

♦Wendy Garza

I didn't want to attend the final service that meant admitting that Robert was really gone. I didn't want to go say goodbye to the baby I used to carry in my arms, who was almost half the size that I was. I didn't want to say goodbye to the toddler I used to play peek-a-boo with to stop him from crying. I didn't want to say goodbye to our fellow magician in our family magic shows. I refused to admit to myself he was gone in hopes of blocking out the pain. I was definitely in a state of denial. I tried so hard to fill my mind with meandering thoughts strong enough to push my emotions into obscurity, but no matter what thoughts I tried replacing the agony with, the sadness would quickly engulf the feeble ideas and put me back into a state of sorrow. I hoped that I would soon awake from this nightmare and see that my little cousin was just fine. He would be sitting on the floor at our house, playfully destroying the Legos we spent hours construct-

ing or seated at the corner desk, drawing rainbows and bunnies.

But it was not to be.

Every once-in-a-while I'll grab the phone and call my younger brother and start a conversation with "Hey Mark, remember that time when Robert..." did this or "what about when Robert..." did that. Then we would smile silently on the phone and reminisce about the beautiful angel that we had the honor of growing up with. He was always so kind and gentle, even before the diagnosis. He was always wiser than his young earthly age. I loved him so much; we all loved him so much.

The first time I was to babysit my little cousin; I could hardly believe that I would be entrusted with the care of someone so little, so cute and so wonderful. I thought he was the most precious thing in the entire world. Though my friends at school all had little brothers or cousins his age, I remember always being so proud of our little Xiong Xiong. I really felt he was the most perfect little person in the world and soon all I would talk about to my friends was my little cousin. I guess I spoke about him a little too much and after humoring me a while, they eventually got tired of hearing about him. One day after a long story about babysitting during lunchtime, one of my friends asked if I ever did anything that didn't involve my little cousin. Well...ok maybe I didn't.

Robert instantly became a permanent fixture in our household. Even before he could walk, we would babysit and play with him and watch as he grew. When he did learn to stroll around on his own, he would request that his mom take the short journey across the street to visit us as a daily after dinner ritual. While the adults sat around talking, we would play games and giggle.

Robert always had a new trinket or little toy to show us; He also had a habit of leaving them in some crevasse of our home and then forgetting about it. So there were always little unsuspecting reminders of our little cousin spread around the house that would make us smile when we discovered them. Of course being

older cousins we couldn't let him get away with it. One year for his birthday we wrapped up all of the old toys that he had left behind. When he tore the big box open and saw his old toys, a mixture of happiness and disappointment emanated from his cute little face. Poor kid, we only teased him because we love him. After the initial shock wore off, we gave him his real gift. It was so great to celebrate birthdays with him. He was always so thankful for all of his gifts. I also remember that he was really clever; somehow he always managed to trick his mother into revealing his present.

Prior to Robert starting kindergarten, he attended pre-k in the summer so that he could learn English, since he spoke primarily Mandarin at home. One of my most fond memories of him was my summer job of picking him up from the half-day class and taking him home. It was a big responsibility, I was again honored that my family had the confidence in me to take care of my little cousin. I wasn't old enough to drive yet, but I had a bike and he would ride on the bar each afternoon on the short two-block ride home. It was fun for the both of us. I tried to paddle as quickly so we could feel the wind in our hair. I'm sure the seat was a bit uncomfortable for him, and I tried to avoid bumps and cracks in the sidewalk, but he never complained about pain or whined about being tired, always keeping a smile on his face. He had a ride home from school, he didn't have to walk, he was grateful. That's how he was, a good kid.

Later that same year, I remember sitting in Auntie Fan-di's living room, and looking up to hear a flurry of commotion as my aunts and uncle crashed through the front door with Robert in tow. Their faces were painted with fear, anger and sadness. Instantly my heart dropped, instinctively knowing that something was gravely wrong, I was scared down to the core of my being. It was unthinkable. For our family, that moment changed all of our lives forever. From then on I started attending Sunday mass with my grandmother and aunts who were already a part of a congregation. I began a constant dialogue with God, praying and bargaining, asking to keep our little angel here with us on earth. Some nights I would stay up to pray the rosary as many times as

possible hoping that God would hear me and save Robert, as if I could hit a target number of prayers, he would somehow be spared.

But it was not to be.

Odd to think but even though he has been gone for so long, remnants of him remain and his goodness still surrounds us. What better place than heaven for an angel that loved Jesus so much? How great it is to know that he is praying for us and watching over us? Whenever I feel pain I think of him. Whenever I want to complain, I would think of the trials he had to go through on a daily basis without complaint. I think of him when I face what seem to be insurmountable odds, and as a new mother, I then also think of my Auntie Fan-di.

Before becoming a mother, I could only see Robert's plight from my vantage point. Now when I reflect on the years of his life, I cannot imagine the heartache my Auntie Fan-di had to endure. I can't imagine the pain that must have torn through her heart when she first heard the words "your child has cancer" or the sorrow in those final moments when she had to let him go. It hurts me so much just to put myself in her shoes for just that one moment, that whenever I do, I have to distract myself from that thought or become flooded with anguish.

With all the paths she could have chosen, she could have easily decided to let her grief swallow her up, and live a life of bitterness. No one would even blame her. She had to live though a trauma that no parent should have to bear. She instead followed the path of goodness. She poured all of her love into her son Marvin, and eventually was rewarded with the birth of another beautiful child, Rebecca. She did not let Robert's life be meaningless.

Becoming a mom you have a selfless love for your child that cannot be understood until the moment you become a parent, and give birth to life from your own flesh and blood. It's a love and bond so strong that nothing in the world can compare to it. I'll admit there have been occasions since the birth of Mateo, that I

pondered how I would respond if something were to happen to him. I look at my beautiful baby and pray that I can protect him from harm and guide him on the right path. When he is old enough, I will tell him about his cousin so he too can derive strength, courage and faith from his story.

They say time heals all wounds, and back then I couldn't see an end to the pain. Robert had touched so many people that everywhere I turned, another family member was in the throes of living with a hole in their heart. But eventually life does go on, and the tears are sluggishly replaced with nostalgic memories of Robert's generous heart and peaceful nature. Now, more than 16 years has passed since that solemn goodbye. Sometimes while out and about at the mall or on the street, I see a kid that might resemble Robert if he was still alive today. I wonder what he would be doing now, which college would he have attended, what he would look like. There are still moments when I'm reminded of his presence and the tears start to well up in my eyes and a lump chokes up my throat. When that happens, I open my nightstand and pull out a little trinket he had once left at our house, and just smile, knowing that he is watching over us in heaven.



「你並不孤單」

◆Homer 謝

夜深人靜，你聽到這麼一句話，但你確知這屋內並沒有其他人時，你可能會有各種不同的反應。很顯然，最合理、也最可能的反應會是恐懼與驚慌。還好，我並不是真正的「聽到」，至少不是我們一般所謂的聽到。這句話好像突然浮現在我的腦海，但其實我並沒有真正去想這些。相信我，在這夜半時分，我不可能會去想這些事。這話就是這樣讓我聽到，好像有人超越了我的所有感官，直接的向我心中發言。我認出那人是誰，但我們回頭再來談這事。現在讓我們先來瞭解一些背景。

時光回到 1995 年。那時數位科技還不普及，因此如果有任何東西被錄製下來，應該也都是錄製在磁帶上，也就是說，如果這些東西存放到現在，大概也都老舊到無法再放出什麼完整的影像了。我的記憶也不比這好到那裏去。但是雖然有些事情我只剩下非常模糊的印象，某些特殊的時刻我卻仍然記憶猶新。那時李中達，我們叫他 Ro-bear，因血癌住院。我媽媽帶著我，還有教堂的其他一些人，去醫院為他祈禱，並陪伴他的家人。我記得中達的媽媽去跟醫生談完話後回來，在轉告我們醫生說了些什麼事時，她就忍不住哭了出来——中達將無法熬過那個晚上。那時我還沒感覺到事情的嚴重性，因為我才九歲。我只知道，人會生病，然後他們去醫院，就會好起來。我知道癌症是很可怕的疾病，會讓人喪命，但那只是發生在別人身上的事。這可是我們的 Ro-bear 啊。我們一直在為他祈禱。天主一定不會將他從我們身邊帶走。因此那晚，當去醫院探視他們的眾人環抱著中達的媽媽

哭泣時，我坐在角落，無法插嘴。

我們回了家。我記得第二天早晨當我準備好要再去醫院時，媽媽告訴我，我們不必去了，因為中達已經離開了。我真是太高興了。那就是說他已經痊癒了，對不？我們的祈禱奏效了。像電影中演到緊要關頭的危險時刻一樣，他安然的度過了，因為劇情總是如此發展。這時我媽媽明白的告訴我：中達離開醫院，到天國去了。

之後不久他們發行了一本小冊子，裏面有一篇中達的小檔案，記載了一些他最喜愛的人、事、物。他將我列為他最要好的朋友。在那個年齡，我們對朋友的選擇有某些標準。我們喜歡那些擁有最多玩具和電動遊戲，可以讓我們跟他一起玩的小孩。我們常喜歡打打鬧鬧，因此我們喜歡那種不容易受傷，不會讓大家掃興的人。我們喜歡身手矯健，打後衛，會接球，射籃準的人。其實我們並不在乎那種親切、溫和、感情豐富、具同情心的人，雖然那種品格才是我們真正應該找尋的朋友。雖然中達跟我算是哥們，但我非常驚訝的發現他將我當作他最要好的朋友。

我在那時就不配被他稱為最要好的朋友，之後我更沒有做什麼來彌補這種愧疚。我把他淡忘了，就像我們對久遠的事情都會慢慢淡忘。我搬過幾次家，到了新的地方，交了新的朋友，然後又跟他們說再見，最後也把他們大部份人都給忘卻了。就像俗話說的，日子就這麼過了。

幾年前，我經歷了一些困境。事情的細節並不重要，因為事過境遷，現在看來，那真的不算是什麼。但我相信我們都有過那種經驗，在事情發生的當下，感覺就好像天要塌下來一樣，沒有人可以幫忙。沒有辦法解決。絕對沒有任何辦

法。雖然我有朋友及家人，但他們不會了解。我只能單獨的面對這困境。嘿，這種事我們都曾經歷過，就隨你自己去想像吧。但這不是重點。重要的是，當我孤寂的躺在那裏，面對著人生最難熬過的暗夜時，我對天主的信心降到了前所未有的最低點。

「你並不孤單。」

突然間，我聽到不知從那冒出來的這句話。我看到了這張面孔。我也知道他是誰。他不是我最後一次見到、聽到的那個九歲男孩。其實，並沒有什麼聽得見的聲音，或看得見的面容。只是一種感覺。但是，這絕不是錯覺。就在那一刻，我想起來了。我想到在 1995 年我讀的那本小書。我發現與我的朋友，我最要好的朋友，李中達所經歷的生死搏鬥比起來，我面臨的問題是多麼的微不足道。很奇怪的是，在一種我無法解釋的原因下，我突然知道，我不再只是孤獨一人面對問題。也許這只是一種巧合。也許這只是無意中浮現出的一個胡思亂想。也許這只是我自己告訴自己，我想要聽到的話。但我感覺到，絕不只是因為這些原因。

現在，有時我喜歡想像他就像任何好朋友一樣，常跟我在一起。當然，我不是說他實體的跟我在一起 -- 我沒有精神分裂或其它毛病。只是一種感覺他的存在，超越了時間與空間的限制。我好像看到，當我做得好時，他在一旁為我鼓掌加油；當我幹了一些蠢事時，他則摀面搖首歎息。大部份時間是後者。我知道，這聽起來好像有些愚蠢、誇張，幾近精神失常，或是，我再說一次，好像是出於想像虛構的…但是這事對我的影響卻是千真萬確的。他改變了我對人生的看法，使我想要做一個更好的人，並且幫助我找到回歸天主的

道路。也許中達那個晚上真的在那裏陪伴我。也許，像掌管理智的另一半腦袋告訴我的，最可能的是，這些全都是記憶所引發的連串潛意識結果。但是不管怎麼說，不論是真是假，無論如何，這一切都是因著中達而來。對一個最要好的朋友，夫復何求？

“You’re not alone”

♦Homer Hsieh

When you hear those words in the middle of the night, when you’re pretty sure no one else is supposed to be in the house, there are a number of ways you can react. The most logical reaction would most likely be that of terror and alarm, for obvious reasons. Fortunately, I didn’t actually *hear* it, at least not in the traditional sense. The words seemed to appear in my head, but I didn’t actually think them either. Believe me, it was the last thing I would have been thinking at the time. It just came to me, as if someone had bypassed all of my senses and spoke directly to my heart. I recognized who it was. We’ll get back to that later. For now, let’s provide some context.

Rewind back to 1995. Digital hadn’t taken off yet, so if anything was recorded, it was probably done on analog, which means it most likely would have deteriorated by now to the point where you pretty much wouldn’t be able to retrieve anything coherent from it. My memory hasn’t fared much better. However, while most of it is still little more than a blur, some specific moments are quite vivid and clear. Robert Li, or Ro-bear, as we would call him, was in the hospital with leukemia, and my mother and I, along with some other people from church, were visiting there to pray for him and be there for his family. I remember Ro-bear’s

mother coming back after talking to the doctors, breaking down in tears as she relayed to all of us what she was told – that he wouldn't make it passed the night. It hadn't dawned on me at the time; I was nine years old. People got sick, and they went to the hospital to get better. I understood that cancer was a terrible disease, and that people died from it, but that was other people. This was our Ro-bear. We had been praying for him. Surely there was no way that God would take him away from us. So as Ro-bear's mother wept in the arms of all of the people that were gathered there at the hospital for them that night, I was sitting in the corner, unable to share in that moment.

We went home. The next morning, I remember being ready to go back to the hospital, but my mother told me that we didn't have to; Ro-bear had left. I was overjoyed. That meant he was all better now, right? Our prayers had worked. It was one of those crucial 50:50 moments, like in the movies, and he had pulled through just like it was always bound to happen. Then my mother clarified: Ro-bear had left the hospital to go to Heaven.

They released a pamphlet shortly afterwards, and in it was a brief interview where Ro-bear had talked about some of the memorable moments and people in his life. He had listed me as his best friend. At that age, there were certain things we looked for in friends. We liked kids with the most toys and video games that we could play with when we hung out with them. We liked to rough house a lot, so we liked other kids who wouldn't get hurt and put a halt to all the fun. We liked other kids who could run fast, play defense, catch Hail Mary passes, and shoot three-pointers with a high percentage. We weren't as appreciative of people who were kind, gentle, sentimental, and caring; the type of qualities we should truly be looking for. Ro-bear was a very close friend, but I was really surprised to find out that he considered me to be his best friend.

I didn't deserve it then, and I most certainly didn't help my case much after that. I'd forgotten about him, as we tend to forget about things that take place a long time ago. I'd moved several times to new places, met new people, said goodbye to them, and

forgotten about many of them as well. Life went on, as the saying goes.

So there I was a few years ago, going through a tough stretch. The details aren't important, because in hindsight, it really wasn't much. But at the time, as I'm sure we can all relate to, it felt like the weight of the world was on my shoulders, and that no one could help me. Nothing's working out. Nothing's ever going to work out. I have my friends and family, but they wouldn't understand. I'm alone in this. Yeah, we've all been there; feel free to fill in the blanks. That's not the important part. What's important is that I was there, lying up all by myself in the middle of one of the toughest nights of my life, my faith in God stretched as thin as it had ever been before.

"You're not alone".

All of a sudden, out of nowhere, I heard this voice. I saw this face. And I knew who it was. It wasn't the nine year old boy that I had last seen and heard. It wasn't so much an audible pitch or visible facial structure. It was more of a feeling. And yet, it was unmistakable. In that moment, I remembered. I remembered what I had read off that pamphlet in 1995. I realized just how trivial my problems were compared to what my friend, my best friend, Robert Li, had to go through while fighting for his life. And strangely, in a way I still can't quite explain, I suddenly knew that I wasn't alone anymore. Maybe it was all just a coincidence. Maybe it was just a random thought that popped into my head. Maybe I was just telling myself something that I wanted to hear. It certainly felt like a lot more than that.

Now, sometimes I like to imagine him just hanging around like any other good friend would. Not physically, of course, I'm not schizophrenic or anything, but just that sense of being around, beyond the constraints of time and space. I imagine him there cheering me on when I do something right, and face palming whenever I do something dumb. Mostly the latter. I know it may sound silly and melodramatic, even borderline insane, and again, maybe it was all just a figment of my imagination... but the effect

that all of this has had on me is real. It's changed my outlook on life, made me want to become a better person, and helped me find my way back towards God. Maybe Ro-bear was really there for me that night. Or maybe, and as the rational side of my brain would tell me, most likely, it was all just a subconscious chain of thoughts triggered by a memory. But at the end of the day, real or not, one way or the other, it was all because of Ro-bear. What more could you ask for from a best friend?

旅途

◆張紹曾

這是來自丹麥，哥本哈根的問候。今天是七月三日，我剛結束了一個長達三週的公務旅行，我也去了幾個，若非因為這個機緣，我自己絕不會專程去的地方。生活是美好的。我的生活一直都很平順。為此我心懷感謝，願能有更多美好的時日。

在歐洲的這段時間，喚起了我第一次來此的回憶。這兩次行程除了都是在七月三日結束外，其實沒有什麼相似之處。但這個巧合給了我機會，去回顧第一次歐洲之旅以來所發生的事情。

那次的朝聖之旅非常美好。往後的那幾年，同行的幾位青少年也都走過了他們生命中不同的里程碑，例如：拿到駕照、大學畢業、進入職場、結婚、生子，等等。Jay 成了炙

手可熱的公司財務長、珮珮結了婚、卉卉對媽媽的角色，越來越得心應手。

但是，中達卻沒有機會到達更多的里程碑。

中達這樣一個溫文有禮、令人喜愛的小伙子，是那種會帶給別人很多正面影響的人。這個世界會因為有他而更好，但為何他不能留在這世上更久些？這真是有些說不通。

這時候，我發現自己拿出「兒童教理老師」的心態，用一個教科書上的標準答案來回答自己的問題。但是，不知怎的，這一次教科書的標準答案不能滿足我。而且我更意識到，具有信仰的知識固然很好，但那實際上使我變得自滿。這個，再加上我對世俗成就的追求，顯示出我已大意的疏忽了我的靈性成長。

我覺察到，這個結果是我對信仰的認知不知從何時起，變得太過於依賴頭腦來說理，而缺乏實踐、憐憫、與同情之心。我不希望再繼續朝這個方向走去。

第一次去歐洲時，在飛機上，中達坐在我旁邊。他承認自己坐飛機時會很緊張。比他年長十歲的我，向他保證不會有事的。藉著我的很多冷笑話，以及我們的互相打氣，我幫助中達比較平順的度過這漫長的飛行。

再把思緒拉回到今天的事，也許這不完全只是個巧合，讓我因想到中達而察覺到自身的一個重大盲點。雖然我們最後的一次相處是在很久以前，但我因想起中達的境遇，而對自己的靈性做了重新的檢討，這必會使我在生命的漫長旅途中，也變得比較平順。

The Journey

◆George Chang

Greetings from Copenhagen, Denmark. It's July 3rd, and I have just completed a 3-week business trip that also enabled me to take several side trips to locales that I otherwise would not have visited. Life is good. Life has always been good. For this I am very thankful, and may the good times continue.

Being in Europe this time brings back memories of my very first trip here. Otherwise without any similarities, these two trips are connected by the same ending date, July 3rd. The coincidence presents an inviting opportunity to reflect on all that has transpired since that first trip.

That pilgrimage was a wonderful experience, and in the years since, the youths of that trip have reached various milestones in life such as getting a driver's license, college graduation, getting the first job, marriage, and parenthood. Jay is a hot-shot CFO, Christina is married, and Teresa has eased into the role of parent.

As for Robert, however, he never got the chance to reach any more milestones.

Such a gentle and pleasant little guy, Robert would have been the kind of person who really made a positive difference in others. The world is a better place with him, so why wasn't he permitted to stay with us longer? It just doesn't seem right.

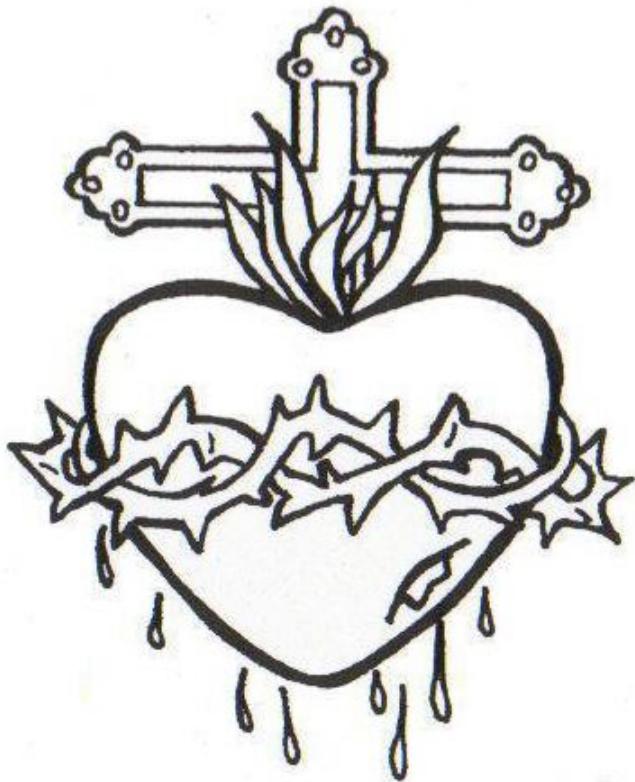
It is at this moment that I caught myself putting on my CCD teacher hat and answering my own question with the textbook answer. But somehow, knowing the textbook answer wasn't good enough this time. Moreover, I realized that having textbook knowledge of the faith, which is a good thing, has actually made me complacent. That, coupled with my pursuits of secular success, has meant that my spiritual growth has been unintentionally neglected.

As a result, I realize that I have somehow become way too

cerebral and philosophical when it comes to the faith and not enough hands-on, compassionate, and sympathetic. This is not the direction in which I wish to continue.

On my first flight to Europe, Robert and I sat next to each other. He admitted to being nervous about flying. Being 10 years his senior, I assured him that it would be alright. With lots of weird humor on my part and mutual encouragement throughout the flight, I made the long flight a little smoother for Robert.

Fast forward to today, perhaps it is not sheer coincidence that my memories of Robert triggered this important realization about a major blind spot within myself. Even with our final encounter being in the distant past, my recollection of Robert's situation ends up triggering a reassessment of where I am spiritually, which is sure to make my journey in life a little smoother as well.



天使就在我們中

◆張 卉

十六年飛也似的過去了。難以想像的是，如果有個小孩是在我上次為中中寫紀念文章的時候出生，他現在已是個高中生，要準備申請大學了。在這十六年中，我的生命也經歷了許多改變。大學畢業後，我在職場上小有成就，更多了「妻子」與「母親」這兩個頭銜。

當念祖叔叔向我邀稿時，我對中達的記憶立即湧上心頭。在這些快樂的回憶中，我印象最深的，是我們一起去朝聖的事，但這也帶來許多感傷。新為人母，我感到特別的心痛與傷感，因為這讓我想到我自己的兒子——德華才九個月大，但他已成為我生命中最大的喜樂。他是我的愛、我的光、我的力量。我對他也有很多期望與夢想。當我想到中達時，我深刻感受到另一位母親的苦楚。

曾有位朋友對我說，孩子將是你喜樂的最大泉源，也會是你痛苦的最大泉源。現在我真正了解她的話了。我以前只是從「一個小孩與自我中心」的角度來看世事，但現在毫無疑問的，我學會了從一個父母的角度來看事情。我絕不願看到他受苦，不管是肉體上的，或精神上的。這個新的視野教會我要對別人更有耐心與關懷，因為我們遇到的每個人，也都是別人的子女。我以前認為，我希望別人如何對待我，我也要如此對待別人。但我現在認為，我希望別人如何對待我的孩子，我也要如此對待別人。這種新的感觸，讓我在待人接物時，比以前更多了一分溫柔、慈善、尊重、禮貌、與愛心。

在我生產前的一個月，我開始有些緊張不安。再加上天主說過，生育是因為厄娃犯錯所受的懲罰，所以我知道這一關絕不好過。但是我從朋友寄來的一封電郵，得到了最大的安慰。這封信現在仍然讓我深深的感動，因此我要與你們大家分享：

一個初生嬰兒與天主的對話

一個嬰兒問天主：「他們告訴我，明天禰要將我送入世間，但是我這麼弱小無助，怎能存活？」

天主說：「你的天使會在那兒等候你的來臨，他會照料你。」

這孩子仍不死心的問說：「但是禰說說看，在天堂裏我不須要做任何事，只要唱歌、微笑就會幸福快樂。」

天主說：「你的天使會為你唱歌，對你微笑。因此你會感受到你的天使的愛，而非常快樂。」

這個小小孩繼續追問：「我怎能知道別人對我說些什麼，如果我不懂他們的語言？」

天主說：「你的天使會對你說最美麗與甜蜜的話，這是你從未聽過的，而且你的天使會用許多耐心與愛心來教你講話。」

「如果我想要跟禰說話時，怎麼辦？」

天主說：「你的天使會把你的雙手合起來，教你怎樣祈禱。」

「誰會來保護我？」

天主說：「你的天使會全心全力保護你，即使要犧牲性命，他也在所不惜。」

「但是我會很傷心，因為我再也看不到你了。」

天主說：「你的天使會常向你說到我，並會教你如何回到我身邊，雖然我總是在你左右。」

這時候，天堂中一片安寧，但可以聽到從地面上傳來的聲音。這個孩子慌忙的問說：「天主，我現在必需要走了，請禱告告訴我，我的天使叫什麼。」

天主說，你只要叫她：「媽。」

現在想想，也許這是中達從天上捎給我的訊息，讓我想起有次我們在舊堂餐廳的對話。他說：「你就像是我的天使。」那是我一生中所受到過最好的讚美。這話由中中這樣的小天使口中說出，讓我感到不堪當受，而且對我影響深遠。我永遠不會忘記他說的這些話。這話提醒了我，我們每個人都可以為別人服務，成為彼此的天使。天使不一定是無影無蹤的。他們在我們每個人的中間。

謝謝你，中中。
我們懷念你，永遠不會忘卻你。



Angels are in all of us

◆Teresa Chang Bumpas

16 years have flown by so quickly. It's hard to believe from the time that I wrote my first reflection about Ro-bear that someone was born into this world, is attending high school and preparing for college. In the past 16 years, a lot has changed for me as well. I graduated from college and achieved success in my career. I have also added the title of "wife" and "mother" to my name.

When Uncle Nien-Tsu approached me about this project, all the memories I had of Robert came back. There were happy memories particularly of our travels together but also bittersweet ones. As a new mom, I felt such heartache and sadness because it also made me think about my own son. Dehua is only 9 months old but he is the joy of my life. He is my love, my light, and my strength. I have so many hopes and dreams for him. And it was thinking about Robert, that I truly experienced another mother's pain.

A friend once told me that your children will be your greatest source of joy and also your greatest source of sorrow. Now I understand exactly what she meant. I used to look at the world through a "child and self centered" point of view but now it is without a doubt from a parent's view point. I never want to see him in pain, whether physical or emotional. This new perspective has taught me to have more patience and compassion towards others, because each person we meet is also someone else's child. I used to think that we should treat others as we would want to be treated. Now I think about treating others as I want my child to be treated. So it is my renewed inspiration to treat each individual with just a little more gentleness, kindness, respect, dignity and love than before.

About a month before I was to deliver my baby, I got a little anxious. Plus, God did say child birth was His punishment to

women for what Eve had done so I knew it was going to be HARD. But I found the greatest comfort from an email that I received from a friend. It was something that still touches me deeply and I would like to share it with all of you:

A Newborn's Conversation with God

A baby asked God, "They tell me you are sending me to earth tomorrow, but how am I going to live there being so small and helpless?"

God said, "Your angel will be waiting for you and will take care of you."

The child further inquired, "But tell me, here in heaven I don't have to do anything but sing and smile to be happy."

God said, "Your angel will sing for you and will also smile for you. And you will feel your angel's love and be very happy."

Again the small child asked, "And how am I going to be able to understand when people talk to me if I don't know the language?"

God said, "Your angel will tell you the most beautiful and sweet words you will ever hear, and with much patience and care, your angel will teach you how to speak."

"And what am I going to do when I want to talk to you?"

God said, "Your angel will place your hands together and will teach you how to pray."

"Who will protect me?"

God said, "Your angel will defend you even if it means risking its life."

"But I will always be sad because I will not see you anymore."

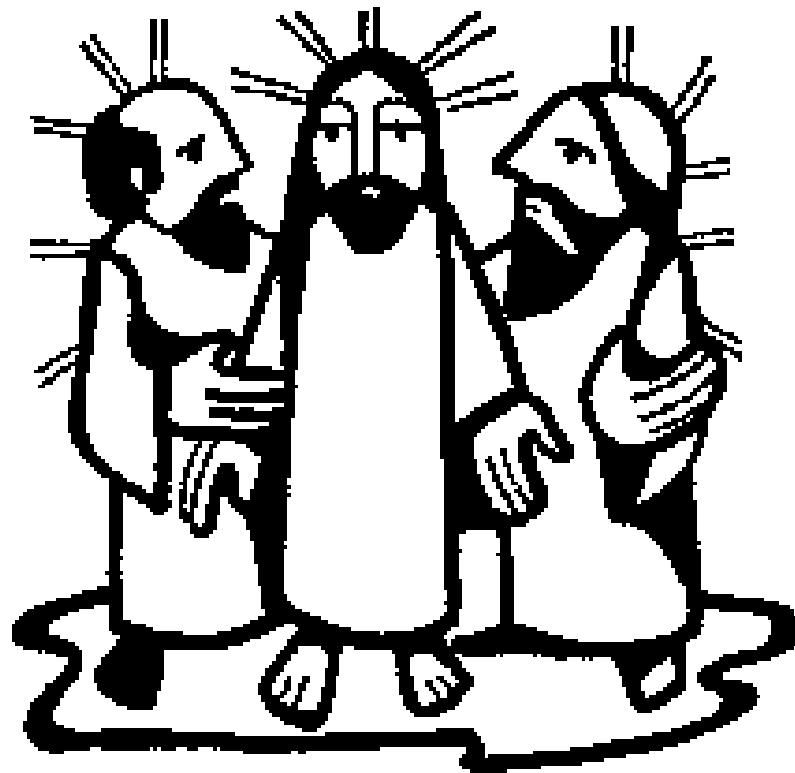
God said, "Your angel will always talk to you about me and will teach you the way to come back to me, even though I will always be next to you."

At that moment there was much peace in Heaven, but

voices from Earth could be heard and the child hurriedly asked,
"God, if I am to leave now, please tell me my angel's name."
God said, You will simply call her, "Mom."

Thinking about it now, perhaps this was a message sent from heaven by Robert to me, reminding me of a conversation that we once had in the old church cafeteria. He said, "you are like an angel to me." That was one of the greatest compliments I have ever received in my life. For an angel such as Ro-bear to say those words to me, has such a humbling and lasting impact. I will never forget those words from him. And it is a reminder that we can all serve as angels for each other. Angels don't have to be invisible. They are in all of us.

Thank you Ro-bear. You are missed but will never be forgotten.



『死亡！你的勝利在那裡？ 死亡！你的刺在那裡？』

◆陳如濱執事

在我 2005 年進修道院之前的一年，我到墓園去探望外婆。通常去看外婆時，我也會去看看我們堂區所有葬在那裡的人 -- 在我的成長過程中，我都是在他們的葬禮上擔任輔祭。特別是，我一定要去看看中達。那一次我去看他時，如果他仍在世，應該是十八歲的人了。我想像，他應該會是一個非常傑出並且虔敬的年輕人，有著遠大的前程。

兩年前的暑期，我在中達過世的醫院，「兒童醫學中心」擔任牧靈工作。這工作對我很有意義，因為我能做一些中達過世時我想做，卻不能做到的事：用言語安撫、慰藉那些在痛苦與煎熬中迷惘的家人及親友。孩子與死亡應該扯不上關係——他們應該有很多美好的未來。中達過世，是我第一次見到親友死亡，我真的是茫然不知所措。身為院牧，我看到許多年輕的病患，雖然他們的生命正在逐漸凋謝，但他們仍充實的過著每一天；他們從天主的愛得到慰藉。他們的勇氣與成熟給了我力量，讓我看到天主的恩寵在人生命中的力量。雖然他們的年紀很輕，但他們的信德與堅毅卻遠超過了一般的基督徒。從他們的苦難中，我看到了美好的事物，我看到了孩子們非常緊密的與基督結合在一起。

在天主的聖寵中死亡，真是主對我們的恩賜；這個恩典在中達的身上，真實的呈現了。我現在真正體認到他的勇氣

與信德，他將自己的苦難與耶穌基督結合，這個見證是我們每個人蒙召去學習的典範。中達的軟弱就是他的力量，正如聖保祿宗徒所說，「我幾時軟弱，正是我有能力的時候。」中達沒有依靠自己的能力，而是完完全全的仰仗天主的照顧，直到他生命的終結。做為基督徒，我們只能祈求有個平安、充滿聖寵的善終；但是，中達真正的做到了。

中達過世時，我問自己：「究竟怎麼回事？」我現在知道，這是天主的恩寵，祂的意旨在中達及堂區其他人的身上真正的承行了。在中達病危的那段日子，堂區如此同心合意的祈禱與在愛內的合一，是我從未見的。隨著心智與信仰的成長，我逐漸明瞭死亡原是生命的一部份，我們每個人都是在逐漸的死亡中。終於，我懂了，並且相信基督已戰勝了死亡，我們不再屬於死亡的權下。我們從上主得到了慰藉，因此我們不再懼怕前面的道路。正如聖保祿宗徒在寫給格林多人的信中所言：「死亡！你的勝利在那裡？死亡！你的刺在那裡？」相對於我以前抱怨天主為何奪去了如此可愛的生命，現在我為前面已經預備下的——我們在天國的賞報——而感到欣慰。願我們都能以中達的勇氣與信德，做為我們生活的榜樣——為我們周遭的所有人，做基督的愛的鮮活例証。



"Where, O death, is your victory? Where is your sting?"

♦Dcn. Reuben Chen

The year before I entered the seminary in 2005, I was visiting my grandmother at the cemetery. Usually, when I visit my grandmother I also visit all the members of our church – the ones that I had helped to bury as an altar boy growing up. Most especially, I make it a point to visit Robert. He would have been eighteen when I visited him back then. I imagine he would have been a very upstanding and holy young man with a great future.

Two years ago, I spent the summer working as a chaplain at Children's Medical Center, the hospital where Robert passed away. I thought it would be fitting that I try to do what I could not do when Robert passed away: to be a voice of consolation and comfort as families and friends try to make sense out of their pain and suffering. Children are not supposed to die – they are supposed to be the future. When Robert passed away, death was a new experience for me and I really did not know what to do. As a chaplain I met with young patients who were slowly dying and yet living every day of their lives to the fullest; taking comfort in that they were loved by God. Their courage and their maturity gave me strength and showed me the power of God's grace in people's lives. Though they may have been young, their faith and perseverance was far beyond any average Christian. In their suffering, I saw something beautiful and I saw children united to Christ in a very intimate way.

To die in God's grace is truly a gift from our Lord and His grace was truly present in Robert. I now understand that his courage, his faith, and his witness of uniting his suffering with Jesus Christ is the model by which we are all called to follow. Robert's weakness was his strength just as St. Paul speaks of his own weaknesses. Robert did not rely on himself but totally and completely on God to see him through to the very end. We as Chris-

tians can only pray for peaceful and graceful death; however, Robert actually achieved it.

When Robert passed away, I asked myself “What happened?” I know now that it was God’s grace that happened and that His will was truly working in Robert and the rest of our community. Never have I seen the parish come together in prayer and unity of love and charity as when Robert was in his final days. As I have grown in maturity and faith, I have come to understand that death is a part of life and that we are all passing away. Ultimately, I know and believe that Christ has conquered death and that death no longer has power over us. We take our consolation in the Lord and we no longer have to be afraid of what lies ahead. As St. Paul writes to the Corinthians, “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death is your sting?” Whereas before I struggled with God for taking away such a precious life, I am now comforted by what lies beyond – our heavenly reward. May we all take Robert’s courage and faith as a model for our own lives – as living examples of Christ’s love for everyone around us.



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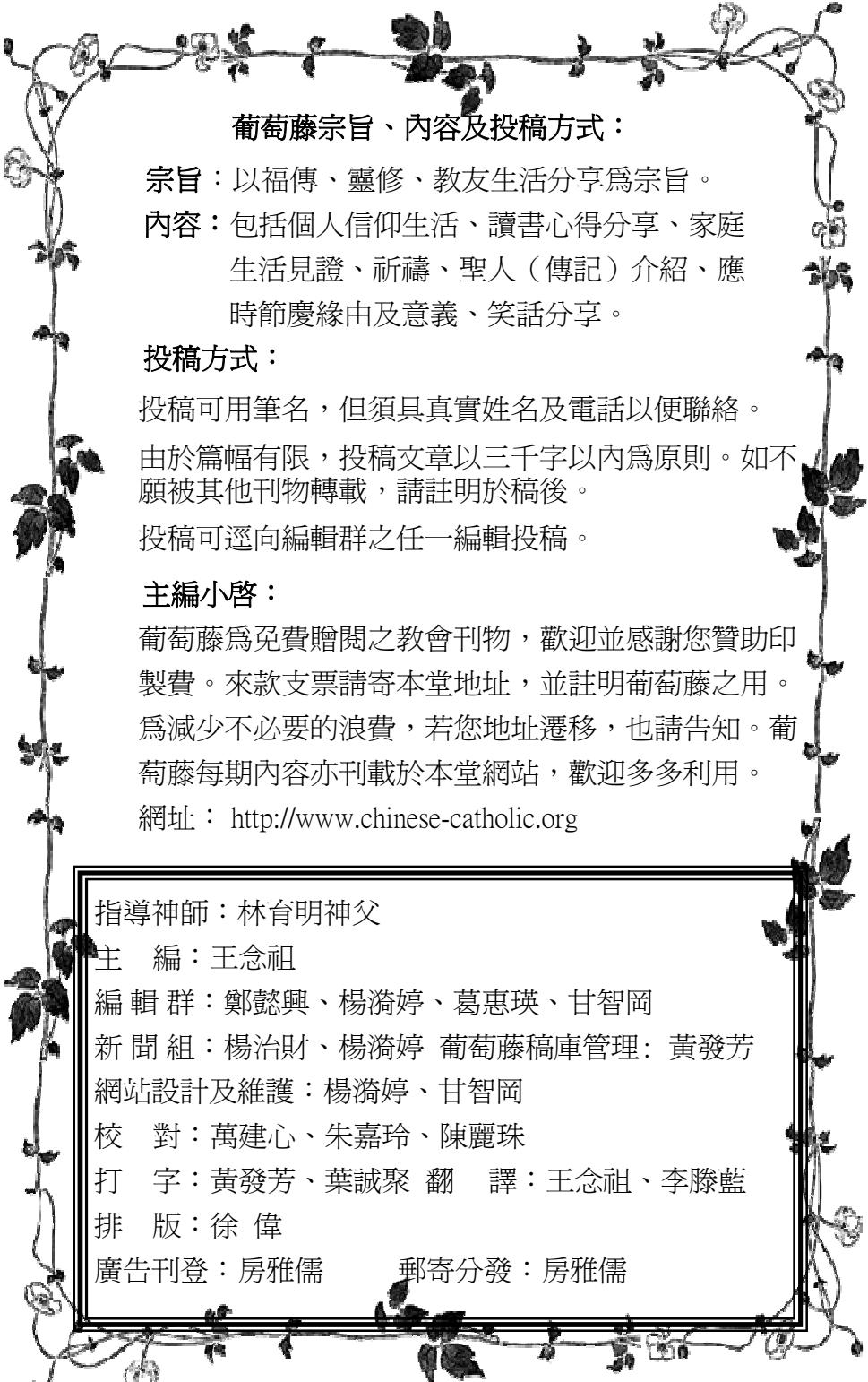
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Sacred Heart of Jesus Chinese Parish
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Plano , TX 75074
(972)516-8500