



When he entered Jerusalem the whole city was shaken and asked, "Who is this?" And the crowds replied, "This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee."

MATTHEW 21:10-11



The Art of Dying

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When I was much younger and idealistic, I might have been ready to die for some worthy cause. Friends about my age had the same experience.

There was something romantic about giving our lives then. Something glorious—or so we thought. There was the brotherhood and sisterhood of us all, peace and non-violence, nuclear arms opposition, equal opportunities for education and housing. Many of us now over fifty thought we would lay down our lives for any one of those dreams.

For some of us, things have changed. We've grown older and, perhaps, wiser, and it seems we're not so eager to die anymore. The glamor has been tarnished, and, for some, the romance

has turned from infatuation to disillusion. Death seems like a tragedy, continually rearing its strength to destroy in full or in part the fruit of our lives.

Yet death continues to remain the only doorway into real life. Without death there is no life—in this life or in any life. For that reason, then, one of the tasks of life is to learn how to die well, something we also need to teach our children. It takes a lifetime to learn how to die for one another, and that is why our young people need a community of adults who seek to master the art of dying. It is also why, for one long week, we tell the story of Jesus and of how, for the sake of us all, he did not back away from death. ●

Reflect

Who has sacrificed for you? Have you "paid it forward" with gratitude?