

## In Hand

I remember vividly as a boy, the times when my father and I would hold hands and walk along the pier to the lighthouse at its end. Whether in calm or storm, it was a special time – a moment in the eyes of a little boy that spoke to unfettered imagination, unlimited possibilities and an infinite intrigue about life.

Some twenty years later, from a seafarer's perspective, I recall seeing the light and pier from the deck of a naval vessel on its circumnavigation of Lake Ontario – again sensing the possibilities for life in the fullness of its living.

With the passing of yet another two decades, I was again captivated by the pier and its light. On a trip to Oakville, curtesy of the National Church, I found myself leaning against the structure. The pier no longer seemed as big, nor the lighthouse so far away. Nonetheless, it still drew me into its grasp for I could feel the spirit and glean the story that was once woven upon my heart. Walking as I did, along Thomas Street, toward the pier, past the familiar church of my youth, I knew why I became a sailor and a priest.

As humans, we need to name the sacred moments of people and places that have graced our lives and enabled us to open our hearts to the wonders, beauty, and capacity of life. When shared in the intimacy of others, true blessedness can occur. It is through such blessedness that the mentoring love of Christ's examples shine forth.

On my "pier of life", some 56 years ago, amidst the clasped hands of a father came a teaching that still shapes my heart, namely that we are indeed "*...in the hands of the man who calmed the sea.*"

Take hold of that which stirs your soul, the sacred that speaks to the blessing of your life and be set free to revel in God's glory, for it is a love that knows no bounds.

- NJP