

St. Francis de Sales Parish

All glory comes from daring to begin.

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Meanderings...

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AS WITH any endeavours that inspire the human spirit to greatness, there are always inspiring moments that endure beyond their time, and rise to say more than the value of their immediate actions. These Olympics were no different. As the opening sequence to the Wide World of Sports always proclaimed, “there is the thrill of victory, and the agony of defeat.”

Victory is such an arbitrary concept, for someone like the now famous, Ghana Snow Leopard (with the Scottish brogue), claims victory for just competing. Or the bronze medalist figure skater conquering her grief at the sudden death of her mother days earlier.

Every medal somehow represented a story of courage, and perseverance, and triumph. And we all sat back and marvelled at the pursuit of excellence that elates the soul and inspires us to our own forms of brilliance.

There was also the agony of defeat, the poor Dutch speed skater, misled by his coach which cost him a gold medal. There was the tearful Canadian sledder who believes she let down a whole nation because she was only fifth best in the world. And of course, not to rub it in too deeply, there was the distraught American Men’s and Women’s Hockey teams, well need I say more.

The opening and closing ceremonies were a mixture of good and bad. Quite honestly, I was hoping that William Shatner would have been beamed up, or someone would have pulled the plug on the Second City TV alumnus Catherine O’Hara. I think what thrilled me the most, and what will endure in those years ahead, was not the Sidney Crosby goal, or the ice-dancers, or the speed skaters, or the phenomenal accomplishment of our cross country skiers, but rather the people of Vancouver and those Canadians who attended the medal presentations.

Every time the flag was hoisted and the anthem played, loud choruses of “*O Canada*” rang through the air. And even though there is much we could be doing better in this country, and even though the values that we profess as a nation are not always consistent with our values as Christians, and even though we have our struggles, for a brief moment in time, we were able to rise above these problems, and in a very innocent way, perhaps somewhat naively, celebrate everything that is good and right about our nation, and everything that is good and right about humanity.

It was a feast of living as we should, a glimpse of what could be. Well, that is liturgy in a nutshell, a participation in who we could and should be. Sometimes it takes an event to remind us who we are.

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