

## FAITH! HOPE! LOVE

Holocaust; a destructive burning, the killing of a large number of people. Webster's Dictionary defines holocaust as a sacrifice consumed by fire, or a thorough destruction involving extensive loss of life especially through fire. These are all synonymous with the mass annihilation of millions of Jews and other people by the Nazi's during World War II. These words, themselves, may provoke feelings of sadness, wretchedness, torment and anguish to you and I. Our emotions pale, in comparison, to those that are vividly clear in the words of Jeannine Burk, one of the hidden children who survived The Holocaust. As I perused her story, three words resonated within me; FAITH, HOPE, LOVE!

"Faith consists in believing when it is beyond the power of reason to believe!" *Voltaire*. Jeannine Burk was a mere three years old when she was first separated from her family during World War II. She had, by her own admission, lost belief in God. She grew older and began to resume Faith as she realized that God had a plan for her. I will be tested throughout high school, college and the remainder of my life and will rely on Mrs. Burk's story to strengthen my Faith.

"Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness." *Desmond Tutu*. Mrs. Burk denounces those that took part in the genocide, torture and torment of the Jewish people during The Holocaust.

She struggles to understand those who question this history. She clings to hope that sharing her story will bring an understanding to all. I hold onto hope that all people are treated equally and respectfully.

“Love is like the wind, you can’t see it but you can feel it.” *Nicholas Sparks*. Jeannine stated, “I was never mistreated – ever! But, I also was never loved.” I, as a young man of fourteen, found it difficult to imagine the overwhelming heartbreak and devastation felt by a small child in Mrs. Burk’s position. I am unable to comprehend the loneliness and solitude of a hidden child living without love; the greatest of the three theological virtues.

The Holocaust is part of history that should never be forgotten. January 27, 2015 is the seventieth anniversary of the remembrance of this tragic and shameful event. As the years continue to pass, The Holocaust survivors will age along with them. The contributions of individuals like Jeannine Burk will live on through her spoken words and precious photos. It should be evident that each of us has an obligation to prevent such devastation from occurring, again, in our world. While I did find it emotionally difficult to hear and see Jeannine’s story, I grew in strength, through her strength. I renewed my FAITH through her actions. I embraced HOPE through her words and I felt LOVE through her pain. I am confident that I will find my voice, bear my own cross, and stand up for the rights of all people. I say, “So should we all!”