



## St. Matthew's Cathedral eNews

### Christ + Compassion + Community

*From the Dean*

### Do You Really Believe He Will Come?

*Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.*

**Today we light the pink candle.** This is Mary's candle. As we will sing on Sunday morning: we light one candle for hope. We light the pink candle on the penultimate Sunday of Advent to help us to recognize that in our dark and lonely hours, God will come to us.

Our collect says, "Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us." I find it interesting that we will pray to God to help us, to heal us, to assist us in a particular difficulty, and when God does help us, we often dismiss it as coincidence or look for a completely non-supernatural explanation.

Louis Zamperini is the subject of a best-selling book written by Laura Hillenbrand and a soon-to-be-released movie. Louie's story is an amazing one of natural strength and resiliency and supernatural intervention.

**Louie Zamperini, born in 1917, grew up in Torrance, California, and started smoking at 5 and drinking alcohol at 8. He was a real hell-raiser. His brother got him involved in distance running, and he became a likely candidate to be the first runner to break the 4-minute mile. He ran in the Olympics in 1936 and was looking forward to the Olympics in 1940 in Japan when it was cancelled due to the war.**

**He became a bombardier in WWII and his plane was shot down over the Pacific Ocean. He finally made it to Japan--after he and his pilot survived in a life raft for 47 days, only to be picked up by a Japanese destroyer and sent to a series of three prisoner-of-war camps.**

**His survival from the deprivations, cruelty, and torture in the prisoner-of-war camp is epic. Although he survived through amazing internal fortitude, after the war he was losing a different battle: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and alcoholism. His life was spinning out of control, his marriage was on the rocks, and in desperation his wife took him to a Billy Graham Crusade in Los Angeles in 1949. Louie gave his life to Christ, and his life would never be the same.**

**Gone were the nightmares of war and of his tormentors, gone were the panic attacks, and gone was his dependence on alcohol to relieve the emotional pain from the debilitating memories and nightmares. This was a battle that even Louie with his intestinal fortitude and resiliency could not win on his own. He needed for God to "stir up his power and . . . come [to him]." And God did when he gave his life to Jesus Christ. Emmanuel--God with us.**

**The babe in the manger is not just a sweet picture and a nice story. His presence is palpable. His power is real. And He's waiting for you to believe in Him and receive Him.**