Another Jericho Road

By Chaplain Sharon J. Reives

Last year April 25, The New York Post reported that a heroic homeless man, stabbed after saving a woman from a knife-wielding attacker, lay dying in a pool of blood for more than an hour as 25 people indifferently strolled past him, a shocking surveillance video obtained by The Post revealed.

Some of the passers-by paused to stare at Hugo Alfredo Tale-Yax on that Sunday morning and others leaned down to look at his face. This courageous man, who jumped to the aid of a woman attacked on 144th Street at 88th Road in Jamaica at 5:40 a.m., was stabbed several times in the chest and collapsed as he chased his assailant.

In the wake of the bloodshed, a man came out of a nearby building and chillingly took a cell phone photo of the victim before leaving. And in several instances, pairs of people gawked at Tale-Yax without doing anything. Later, another man stopped, leaned over and vigorously shook Tale-Yax's body. After lifting the victim's head and body to reveal a pool of blood, he also walked off.

Not until some 15 minutes after he was shaken by the pedestrian – more than an hour and 20 minutes after the victim collapsed – did firefighters finally arrive and discovered that Tale-Yax, 31 had died. Firefighters were responding to a 911 call of a non-life-threatening injury at 7:23 a.m. when they found his body. Cops said they received four 911 calls at around the time of the attack reporting a woman screaming, but found nothing. They received no other 911 calls. Are we not accountable to other people? Are we not our brother's keeper?

We are educating more people than ever before; more degrees are granted than the world has ever seen. Yet, have we become a nation of violent, unloving strangers? With all of our technological achievements and major advancements in medicine, here we are no better off morally or spiritually than those people a long time ago who first heard Jesus tell about a man who fell among thieves on the Jericho Road. We need to recover a sense of human compassion!

The moral standards that we once learned to live by have been erased one right after another. Our children have so few examples to follow. They hear of important leaders lying, those in public life taking bribes, and all kinds of moral failure occurring in high places. Urban life itself allows for a certain mischievous privacy and anonymity. Grandma is not there watching. That big, old oak tree that would speak, if it could talk, is not there. That old back yard swing… you have not been seen in a long time. Everyone we see is a stranger. This means that one is left purely on his or her own. What an awful circumstance in which to try to avoid moral collapse! And many have found it to be absolutely too much to handle.

In this new millennium, we need servant leaders who will demonstrate what it means to live the abundant life as a people of God, and who will demonstrate what it means to be a person under God, in other words, to live out the Gospel on our own doorsteps. If servant leaders would all go back to the old landmark, then future generations would go thorough this life's journey helped and healed and empowered to engage meaningfully in living for self and for others.

If we get enough people loving God, reaching across race and clan, showing compassion, one day the Jericho Road experience shall, indeed, be no more.

Road tax collection, decal issuance begins

From CFAY Security

Road tax is paid every spring. Yen payments for regular size cars and trucks can be made at the Kanagawa Tax Office (KTO). Payments for motorcycles and mini-cars can be made at the local city hall or ward office, starting April 1.

KTO representatives will collect road tax at the Community Readiness Center in room 212, March 24, 25 from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 - 2:30 p.m. and April 12, 14 and 15 from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 - 2:30 p.m. This service includes Ikego residents. Road tax collection for Negishi will be at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation classroom, Bldg. 19045, in Negishi March 29 from 9 – 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 – 2 p.m.

Vehicle owners can obtain the 2011 base decal at the respective Vehicle Registration Office (VRO) after road tax has been paid.

The amount of road tax to be paid depends on the type of vehicle, which can be determined by the number shown on the top of the license plate. The respective tax amount is as follows:

- 40/400Y and 50/500Y plates - 7,500 yen
- 30/300Y plates 4.5L and below - 19,000 yen and 22,000 yen for 4.6L and above
- 11/100Y plates - 32,000 yen

Call VRO at 243-5011/5896 for more information.

Foreign Language Week celebrated

By Steve Parker,
The Sullivans Elementary School Public Affairs

National Foreign Language Week was celebrated at The Sullivans Elementary School March 7 through 11, with a series of performances that not only bridged the language barrier but danced across it with style, grace and loads of enthusiasm.

Katriel Moreno and Bennet Rowell prepare to perform "*El Jarabe Tapatio*" (The Mexican Hat Dance) during The Sullivans School Foreign Language Week celebration. Photo by Rowena Moreno

Classes filled with smiling students sang and danced for teary-eyed parents, proud teachers, restless siblings and supportive friends in a Hispanic cultural performance that touched the heart of everyone who witnessed it.

Immediately following the dances, the hungry performers were sated by an international potluck buffet which changed daily according to the whims of that day's proud parents.

For the parents, it was hard to decide which the bigger treat was; sampling a diversity of delicious food or discuss the performance with their kids and other students. Luckily, they did not have to choose and both treats were enjoyed in abundance by all who participated.

Each kindergarten class presented a show that lasted 15 minutes and included five dances. The five dances presented were the Macarena from Spain, the Guaracha from Cuba, the Merengue from the Dominican Republic, Ballet Folklorico from Mexico and Reggaeton from Puerto Rico. The Ballet Folklorico dance was "El Jarabe Tapatio" which is sometimes referred to in English as the Mexican hat dance.

"The goals of our FLES program are to showcase learning language and culture in a non-apprehensive environment," said Laura Batista, a Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) teacher at The Sullivans Elementary School.

Batista was very pleased with the success of the program and proudly provided statistics that demonstrated the scope of the project.

"Five days, eight shows, 144 students, 211 parents, 25 babies in strollers, 125 potluck dishes and too many smiles to count," Batista added.

"It was a wonderful performance," Deborah Brownlee, mother of one of Batista's students said. [Batista] did a great job with all the kiddos, great memories."