



*Reflection from Fr. Garry 1/5/2020*

Rachel Naomi Remen tells the story about being a young doctor when a drowned child was brought to the emergency room. The child could not be saved, and the parents were crying. Naomi's eyes filled with tears. She remembered thinking that she had made a big mistake by crying in front of them, and she swore she would never make that mistake again. She had been trained by the medical institution to succeed, which at that time meant never to outwardly show the more "feminine" aspects of tenderness, compassion, and empathy. To make sure she realized her "mistake," a Senior Resident took her aside afterward and said, "They were counting on your strength, not your tears." She felt humiliated.

Many years later, Rachel champions the idea that medicine is not mainly science, but philosophy. It is not about the science and technology of fixing the body, but about the philosophy of promoting life. She believes that the survival of the human race depends not on our ability to scientifically and technologically master things (which has led to our trashing our planet, among other things), but on our understanding of the philosophical relationship connecting all things. Such understanding would know that a doctor crying with the parents of a drowned child could offer something that medical science never could.

In John's gospel, (Mat 2: 2-12) Jesus speaks of his followers being one in him, just as he is one with God in heaven. I believe he was describing the same mystery of connectedness that Rachel Naomi Remen speaks of. We humans are very good at pursuing scientific mysteries and figuring out how things work in that realm. However, if we want to find true healing and wholeness, we will need to understand much more fully that we are intimately connected with each other and with the creation around us.

*Blessings, Fr. Garry*

