

Small Talk – August 13 2021
By Michael Small

Friday the 13th – happens occasionally and today is one of those days. It happens once to three times a year and in 2021 this is the only Friday 13th. Why do some ascribe to Friday the 13th bad luck? *Like many superstitions that have evolved over time and across cultures, it is difficult to pinpoint the precise origins of Friday 13th. What we do know, though, is that both Friday and the number 13 have been regarded as unlucky in certain cultures throughout history. In his book "Extraordinary Origins of Everyday Things," Charles Panati traces the concept of the cursed back to Norse mythology, when Loki, the god of mischief, gate-crashed a banquet in Valhalla, bringing the number of gods in attendance to 13. Deceived by Loki, the blind god Hodr was tricked into shooting his brother Balder, the god of light, joy, and goodness, with a mistletoe-tipped arrow, killing him instantly.*¹ The name for such a day is Paraskevidekatriaphobia.

I have mentioned before that our son was born on Friday the 13th and for Sheila and me that particular event has transformed Friday the 13th's into a day of blessing and miracle. It was and is a day of birth and new life. It is a day when new adventure began, and winding roads have been walked. The superstition bad luck or danger has been broken and that is good! (But watch out for the black cats.)

For the first time ever, in the state of Iowa, last night there was a major league baseball game played near the site where *Field of Dreams* with Kevin Costner was filmed. Some 8,000 people watched the *Field of Dreams* game in Dyersville Iowa – and what a treat. The players walked onto the field through the corn. In the ninth inning the Yankees took the lead, only to outdone by the White Sox with a two-run walk off homer winning 9-8. Dreams do come true.

Late last night I had to watch again *Field of Dreams*. It is a movie about *going the distance . . . to ease his pain!* If you have not seen the movie, I would highly recommend it. Watch to the very end, through all the credits. The last words you will read on the screen are . . . *for our parents!*

Infrequently are things or actions dedicated to our parents. Many parents have stood with we who are children through thick and thin, the best of days and worst of days. Parents have laughed with their children and cried with them. And ultimately the best parents have treated their children with unconditional love, never-ending respect, forgiveness, discipline, restoration, and honor – and when appropriate they have let their children go – as arrows soaring through the sky to find new adventures! Parents equip their children to become healthy adults and potentially loving parents. To our parents, children and the world are forever thankful! For they have been blessing and they have passed those blessings on. And yes, it takes a village to raise a child, and many have been as parent to all of our children. Thank you all!

¹ More details at <https://www.cnn.com/style/article/why-friday-13-unlucky-explained/index.html>

But, as we all know, relationship with our parents can be a mixed blessing. For many, relationships with parents are balanced, loving, and productive. Those relationships evolve and grow and continue to be helpful and supportive. But relationships with parents for too many are difficult at best, painful, and potentially destructive. The pathway to healing and restoration is difficult and may be impossible. At best, we continue to try to go the distance, we seek to ease the burden and pain that are a part of parenting and being a child. Sadly, there are times when relationship, parents, and family are so broken that the time comes to move on. And in that movement may new and loving parents be found and may healing begin with loving persons who heal the deeply wounded and hurting children of the world.

May each of us, as people of this global family, be loving and kind in our words and actions. May we respect and honor. May we bring sunlight into the darkness of brokenness and despair. May we become beacons of hope and possibility. And may we be the best parents whether we have no children at all or if we have children, grandchildren, greatgrandchildren!

These words are for our parents, living or dead – again – we say thank you!

In the spirit and agape love of Jesus, Michael

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