

Choose Life

April 29, 2003

I had a chance to do that (*choose life*) in March, in the midst of a painful open heart surgery and complications. When I was a child in New York City I had strep throat (before penicillin!) and got rheumatic fever. That can lead to trouble in the aortic valve. Sixty-one years later that trouble caught up with me.

So much of our twenty-first century society leads us to choose death: war over UN inspectors, television and media focus on murder and destruction, dark literature in every language. One person's choice of life over death is small, but, as my study of quantum thinking has shown, significant.

To choose life is to choose the pain, and to choose the wonder of friends and family being there for you in the midst of that pain. To choose life is to choose the patience of a long recovery: sitting still and watching the trees grow! And it is to choose the wonder of a church family who won't be put off from being there with gifts and presence. To choose life is to choose the immanence of death and to choose the wonder of each day when a heart pumps through an implanted valve.

To choose life is to choose medical and political systems that are far from perfect, and to celebrate the young emergency room doctor who said: "I just do not know what the cause of this is!" It is to choose to weep at that humble confession in the midst of technical haste and arrogance. To choose life is to choose to work some more, and to be a part of the continuing *celebration* and *documentation* of the power of dialogue.

In fear and trembling, in pain, I chose life. I am glad I did.