Crumbled church, crumbled faith?

Dedicated in loving memory to Paula Szala

By Chris Szala

As I look at the church, I see the desecration, the rubble, the ruin, and ash. What once was a noble structure, a holy and sacred place of worship, is now burned. It was engulfed by the fires of Hell, and swallowed by the throat of the devil’s holocaust. The only part of the structure to survive is the bell tower.

Although eerie and stark, it is still an amazement. The massive flames that claimed most of the church did not defile the tower. It still and will forever stand erect.

The bell tower in many ways represents my own faith. Recently, my young Aunt passed away, and I was a pallbearer. It was the first time in almost four years that I had been in church and felt some real comfort and peace. I felt true attachment and warmth. I had been to church for Christmas and holidays, but it did not feel sacred to me. Church used to be very important to me. I was an altar server, and I attended Parochial School as a child. I had great faith and comfort in the church, but much has happened since that time. I have had doubt, sorrow, and anger. I became an apostasy. God became a luxury I could not afford. But in that moment, as I walked down the aisle along side that coffin, things were different. I felt a reverence that had not been there in a long time. I had an epiphany. I had a reconceptualization of God.

Perhaps my faith is a lot like that bell tower. My faith used to be very strong and mighty. I had great turmoil and destruction by fire, but my tower always be that original piece there. And as the holy water splashed the casket, just as the rain pattered on my shoulders, I watched my Aunt be entombed.

While one soul was laid to rest, another soul was being reborn.