

Paul writes that nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God." This is a rock bottom truth. This is Good News at its best.

During World War II a German soldier, Joseph Schultz, was sent to Yugoslavia shortly after the invasion. He was a loyal, young German soldier on patrol. One day the sergeant called out 8 names, his among them. They thought they were going on a routine patrol. As they hitched up their rifles, they came over a hill, still not knowing what their mission was. There were 8 Yugoslavians there, standing on the brow of the hill: 5 men and 3 women. It was only when they got about 50 feet away from them, when any marksman could shoot out an eye of a pheasant, that the soldiers realized what their mission was.

The 8 soldiers were lined up. The sergeant barked out, "Ready!" and they lifted up their rifles. "Aim," and they got their sights. And suddenly in the silence that prevailed, there was a thud of a rifle butt against the ground. The sergeant, and the 7 other soldiers, and those 8 Yugoslavians stopped and looked. Private Joseph Schultz walked toward the Yugoslavians. His sergeant called after him and ordered him to come back, but he pretended not to hear him.

Instead, he walked the 50 feet to the mound of the hill, and he joined hands with the 8 Yugoslavians. There was a moment of silence, then the sergeant yelled, "Fire!" And Private Joseph Schultz died, mingling his blood with those innocent men and women. What was found on his body was an excerpt from St. Paul. It was: "Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices in the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres."

Joseph Schultz experienced the love of God. God's love surrounded him and filled him. Not even the evil and horror of war could keep God's love from living within Joseph. Joseph was a witness to the love of God on that hill.

What about us? Like Joseph Schultz, daily we are bathed with God's love. From conception until death we never escape the presence of God's personal and individual love for us.

So, continue to accept this unconditional gift from God. Through our ups and down this week, know that we are not alone. God assists us. God supports us. God holds us.

My sisters and brothers: Remember the Good News: Nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God."