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Mission Statement for St. Paul's: To proclaim God's love by word and example and to seek Christ in one another.

May 10 - 16, 2020

The Readings for Sunday May 10:

First Reading: Acts 7:55-60
Psalm: 31:1-5, 15-16
Epistle: 1 Peter 2:2-10
Gospel: John 14:1-14



Crises is a part of life. Some are global such as the Pandemic we are currently experiencing. Others are more personal - cancer, divorce, the death of a loved one. Here is the question: "Is it possible to experience God in the midst of this kind of catastrophe?"

Today, we find ourselves living through a Pandemic most of us never even imagined happening to us. I must ask myself, "why"?

Those who came before us, and some who are still living today lived through much more hardship than what we are currently experiencing.

This is not to discount Covid-19 but to put it into perspective.

As I reflect on the question of experiencing God in the mist of catastrophe, two things stand out to me from this week.

Esther and Joe Welden. I have witnessed many marriages over the years. Many I would even classify as "good marriages". Esther and Joe's marriage exceeds anything I have ever encountered. These two have always stood out as people I respected, wished to emulate, and enjoyed. From watching them walk down the sidewalk each morning hand in hand going for their morning coffee, to Joe's humor and Esther's kindness. I do not believe these two sat in judgement of anyone. Instead they strove to help where possible and to be, "God's face", to those they met along the way.

In the last few weeks Joe experienced many setbacks. Sadly, because of this virus it made it impossible for Esther to be by his side, a place she has always been. Esther did not take no for an answer, she brought Joe home and was by his side during the last days of his life. She continued to say the Lord's Prayer each evening with Joe, (something they have done together before going to bed each evening), even though he was not able to say it with her.

During all this Esther always showed grace and gratitude to those who called to let her know they cared.

I personally have no doubt if the situations were reversed, Joe would have shown the same undying love for Esther.

The second thing that stands out for me this week, was looking out my sliding glass door to see a Baltimore Oriole looking back at me. Mr.

and Mrs. have been paying us visits each day since that first sighting.

I have spent quite a bit of time looking for them and quietly watching them as they enjoy the orange slices left out. As I watch, a calm comes over me, sometimes even joy. I feel as if God has landed outside my door to bestow his peace during a troubled time.

I feel I have experienced God through Esther and the life she is living and Joe in the life he lived. This week as we lost Joe it really came home to me.

And, every time I see a bird, smell a flower, or walk a dirt road with the beauty God nature around me; I know I am experiencing Him.

Vickie



Congratulations to Jack and Carol Lasher on the birth of their first great grandson, Jonathan Joseph Fura, on Thursday, April 30. He weighed in at a mighty 7 pounds 2 ounces.

Dear Friends: The birth of a child is a joyous and solemn occasion in the life of a family. It is also an occasion for rejoicing in the Christian community. I bid you, therefore, to join Kristina and Jonathan in giving thanks to Almighty God our Heavenly Father, the Lord of all life, for the gift of Jonathan to be their son and with Claire, for a new brother. BCP p. 440

May Birthdays Robert Kimmell May 1, Trent Caine May 2, Richard Marker & Joel Maxey May 10, Scott Finlon May 14, Carole Canfield May 23, Gaby Warriner May 26, Katherine Syle May 28, Lucas Bartron & Jerry Sock May 29.

Our thanksgivings: We give thanks for those who celebrate their birthdays this month. *O God, look with favor, we pray, as they begin*

another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen their trust in your goodness all the days of their life. Amen. We give thanks for those celebrating wedding anniversaries this week. *Grant o God, in your compassion, that those celebrating wedding anniversaries this week may live out the covenant they have made. May they grow in forgiveness, loyalty and love, and come at last to the eternal joys, which you have promised through Jesus Christ our Lord; and may the blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with them this day and forever. Amen.*

Need a Daily Meditation Guide?

Betty has the next issue of Forward Day by Day (May, June and July). If you would like a copy to be sent to you, please call the office at 570-278-2954 and leave a message. The meditations are written by a different author each month. The daily readings are listed for your convenience in finding them in your Bible. A scripture verse from the readings is highlighted and the author relates the passage to our lives to make it meaningful. If you have never used a daily devotional, now is an excellent time to start with Forward Day by Day.

For those who are ill or have requested our prayers: Margaret Burgh, Kathy Warriner, Naomi Bennett, Justin, Rita Leigh, Fr. John Wagner, Eric, Fr. Arthur & Mo. Jenny.

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

I realize that most of us are stuck at home with concerns about family and finances. That's the bad news, but if there were to be an upside it is this: "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." Apparently, neither has the Corona Virus prevented the USPS from delivering mail. That means that we still receive bills on a regular basis and we have payroll to make. If it is at all possible under our current conditions, please send your tithes and pledges to the church office at 276 Church St., Montrose, PA 18801. Another option would

be to slip your pledge under the office door if you happen to be going by church. Thank you for your attention to this request. We will just continue to do the best we can with what we have. God's peace, Lynne

office hours. After hours call Arthur Jones at 570-665-1707 or email him at JonesAL0@sewanee.com

3 Photos this week.

Pastoral Emergency or Non-Emergency

Contact: you can call the parish office during

“The Father Arthur Missive” [The F.A.M.]

Written by the Reverend Arthur Jones, III – on Monday, May 4th, 2020.

Matthew chapter 5, verse 4 instructs us this way: *“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”*

Greetings, beloved friends. This is Father Arthur. As you know by now, our brother in Christ, Joe Welden, passed away early Saturday morning at his home in Montrose. Joe was very dear to me; just as he was very dear to each of you. I was blessed enough to spend quite a bit of time with him at his home, in Tunkhannock at his room, and in Scranton at his side. I'm fairly certain that Joe and Esther were by far the two people at St. Paul's who shared the Daily Offices in person with me most frequently. Joe and I spoke on the phone quite a bit, too.

Last Wednesday morning, Mother Jenny and I felt compelled to drive from Elmira to Joe and Esther's house in Montrose in order to be as physically close to him as possible. We parked in their driveway – and called Esther on speakerphone. She was kind enough to sit next to Joe as Mother Jenny and I observed Noonday Prayer together aloud while Joe listened and participated as best he could. Afterwards, I spoke directly to Joe on the phone. I told him that I missed him. I told him that I loved him. I blew my horn once or twice to let him know that we were outside. Then I told him that Jenny and I were thinking about him; and that we were holding him in prayer. I asked him to rest, to gather his strength. It was hard for us to leave Joe's house. The drive back to Elmira was very solemn and very quiet.

I didn't get to say goodbye to Joe. I didn't get to hug him. I truly wish I could have seen him smile one more time. However, I'm well aware that life doesn't always unfold in the ways we want – or in the ways we need. Therefore, I wish to extend my deepest condolences to Esther and to every one of Joe's family members and friends. His was a life well-lived and well-loved. And that is perhaps the highest compliment that can be said truthfully said about anyone.

Regarding my own health status, last week was rough. While Mother Jenny and I aren't getting worse (good news), we also aren't getting better (not-so-good news). I have a follow-up appointment with my personal care physician on this Wednesday (May 6th). I covet your prayers.

Bishop Kevin sends you all his love and his prayers.

Along with this missive, you will also find my homily for yesterday – the Fourth Sunday

of Easter. I pray it will resonate with your hearts, minds, and spirits.

May the Lord be with you. May the Lord be with us all. Until my next communique, please stay safe and be blessed.

Most Respectfully,

Arthur+

Bradford Pears Bloom

Spring is trying to come although it is a cooler one. Our beautiful Bradford Pears on Chestnut Street have bloomed. Like our rhododendrons in front of the church, they are worth peaking at if you get to town.



Memorial Garden

St. Francis and our child holding a bird in the Memorial Garden survived another winter. They bring a sense of peace and balance that is welcome along with the plants and flowers.

