



Milton Lutheran Parish

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church – 1125 Mahoning Street, Milton, PA 17847 – 570-742-7473

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church – 100 Mahoning Street, Milton, PA 17847 – 570-742-4601

Deacon Gary Schaeffer, Interim Pastor

Dear Friends of the Milton Lutheran Parish,

I hope you are doing okay and are being safe and healthy. As I write to you this week it is hard to comprehend that we have been in the midst of this pandemic for over two months now. I miss each of you and I look forward to the day when we are able to see each other in person again.

In our Gospel lesson for this week Jesus talks about preparing a place for each one of us. Often this text is one that is used as a way of thinking about what heaven will look like, a place with many rooms made special for each of us. But as the text continues, we see that Jesus' words are less about a place than a relationship: our relationship with Jesus and God the Father. They tell us that in Jesus we know all we need to know about God, and just as we can have a relationship with another human person, we can also have a relationship with God that will one day be as real and obvious as are our relationships with one another. This passage is one of hope. It is a reminder that during a dreary time in our lives like this that God reaches out through an unwavering faithful relationship.

My prayer for all of us this week is that we are reminded of this relationship that God has with us and that we are able to experience that through the relationships we have with one another, and through the stories we read in scripture about Jesus.

I've enjoyed worshipping with all of you over the past several weeks, even though we are apart, I'm reminded how the Holy Spirit moves and works in ways that we can't comprehend. If you have been unable to watch the videos or participate online, I hope our weekly devotional has been a blessing for you.

This week we will gather for worship again online on Sunday, Morning May 10. We will be receiving communion. You are invited to bring some bread and wine with you as you watch the video. As we did on Easter, there are no hard and fast rules, please use what you have available and it's okay if you don't have any wine. You can access the worship video on my YouTube Channel, the parish website or either church's Facebook page. Also, included with this mailing are two devotional resources. We hope they will be helpful to you this week.

As always, if there is anything that you need please don't hesitate to reach out to me. Even if you are just looking for someone to talk to, please feel free to give me a call. (845) 636-0194. Or e-mail me at schaeffer0319@gmail.com

I hope you each have a blessed week.

Gary Schaeffer

Sunday May 10, 2020- Home Devotional



Opening prayer:

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Readings: *(if you don't have a bible handy, biblegateway.com is a great resource. We use NRSV "new revised standard version" as our translation for worship)*

Acts 7:55-60

The martyrdom of Stephen

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. *(Ps. 31:5)*

1 Peter 2:2-10

God's people chosen to proclaim God's mighty acts

John 14:1-14

Christ the way, truth, and life

Questions to talk about:

1. Which words or actions of Jesus have had the greatest impact on your life and behavior? (John 14:1-14)
2. When have you forgiven someone whom others would have wished harm or vengeance? (Acts 7:55-60)
3. When was a time you were desperate to be rescued, saved or freed from a situation? (Psa 31)
4. How do you relate personally to people in your daily life who are "nones" or unbelievers? (1 Pet 2:2-10)

Pray the Lord's Prayer together

Bless one another saying:

May God bless you this week and always. AMEN

Resources:

Opening prayer: Sundaysandseasons.com #32232
Questions for discussion: workingpreacher.com



Mother's Day Devotional

In our faith God is traditionally referred to as a father, although we recognize that God has many different characteristics based on our experience of God. At different points in our lives God can be seen as having both paternalistic traits and maternalistic traits. So, in honor of Mother's Day let us celebrate and reflect on God as mother.

A mother's love for her children is one of the strongest forces in the world.

God compares Godself to a mother many times in both the Old and New Testaments. God told the Israelites "I am the rock that bore you-the God who gave you birth." God also promised them, "As one whom a mother comforts, so I will comfort you."

But when God chose to reveal himself in bodily form, God came as a man, Jesus. God could have chosen any form- a fierce animal, a bird, a tree, or even a woman. In biblical times God would not have had the access and respect as a woman that a man was afforded. God chose to come as a man. Someone able to walk among the people easily, without fear. God could have put Jesus on earth as an already full-grown man. But what did God do? God gave him a mother. God's "maternal" instinct wanted God's son to experience that motherly love, a childhood with skinned knees and a mother's kisses. God knew that to truly relate to all humankind, God would need those lifelong experiences. We know that God is referred in the scriptures predominantly as a man, a father, an authority figure. But also, as someone with love, compassion and caring for God's creation; like a mother. God has no gender and is one thing and everything at once.

Related scripture to read relating to God as mother.

Deuteronomy 32:18 , Hosea 11:3-4, Isaiah 49:15, Psalm 131:2,
Isaiah 42:14-15, Deuteronomy 32:11-12, Matthew 23:37-39, Isaiah 66:13

Questions to talk about:

1. Have you ever thought about God from the perspective in the scriptures listed?
2. How does thinking of God in this way change your perspective or reaffirm it?

Closing Prayer

On this day when we acknowledge the importance of motherhood among us, we first give thanks that you are a loving parent to us all. We give you thanks for the mothers among us, and ask that you strengthen them in their daily tasks. May they be given the honor and thanks they deserve but often do not receive. We give you thanks, O God, who is a loving Mother and Father to us all, and in whose name we pray. Amen.

Donna Riccio- Parish Office Administrator