

Third Wednesday in Lent – March 18, 2020 – Baptismal Promise this Week To PROCLAIM the Good News of God in Christ Through Word and Deed

ONE - Read the following essay from Elca.org –

“ELCA Faith Practices: Living Our Baptismal Covenant”

Think about proclaiming the good news. It's easy to envision a pastor in the pulpit on Sunday morning bringing the Word of God to the gathered people. **But** through our baptismal covenant, **we all are called to proclaim** the good news of God in Christ. Not just the pastor, but every one of us. And not just once, or once in a while. We are called to proclaim the good news day after day, never ceasing, just as the disciples did in the passage above.

What does it mean to proclaim the good news of God in Christ? As the Church, acting together and as individuals, we have a story to tell. We have the story of God's movement in our lives through the saving actions of Jesus Christ. The life, death and resurrection of Jesus is not simply a story in the Bible. Rather it's the story of our lives and the story of what brings us life. We simply share with others how God is working in our lives. We share the story that shapes our story.

We are living out the story of Christ in us. We are proclaiming the story of God's saving grace in our lives when we:

- **Invite others to the church** where Christ is proclaimed
- Confess our faith **through song and word in worship**
- **Offer encouragement** to a friend and others who are ill or in need
- Show Christ through our **daily lives and work**, which express thanks to God and care for the common good
- **Talk about our faith** in our homes and with others
- Live prepared to **give a reason for the hope** within us

TWO – Read the following two scriptures

Acts 5:43 And every day in the temple and at home they did not cease to teach and proclaim Jesus as the Messiah.

Luke 24: 28-49

Narrator: ²⁸ As [Jesus and the two disciples from Emmaus] came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, saying,

Disciples: “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.”

Narrator: So, he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. ³² They said to each other,

Disciples: “Were not our hearts burning within us^[a] while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?”

Narrator: ³³ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴ They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!”³⁵ [The Emmaus pair] told what had happened on the road, and how Jesus had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

³⁶ While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, **Jesus:** “Peace be with you.”^[a]

Narrator: ³⁷ They were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost.

Jesus:³⁸ “Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”

Narrator: ⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.^[b]⁴¹ While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them,

Jesus: “Have you anything here to eat?”

Narrator: ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate in their presence. ⁴⁴ Then he said to them,

Jesus: “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.”

Narrator: ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶ and he said

Jesus: “Thus it is written, that the Messiah^[a] is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses^[b] of these things. ⁴⁹ And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so, stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THREE - Reflection – Since we are practicing ‘social distancing’ and not worshipping together, this reflection is solo or family work.

QUESTION # 1 – Which of the six ‘bullet points’, on the previous page have you been acting out in your personal life in the last six months?

In our own community, I lift up Jan Cruz’s example of proclamation/witness. Responding to my Ash Wednesday sermon challenge to pick an accountability partner, Jan picked three people to whom she sends a weekly reminder of faith and devotion during this Lenten season.

Question # 2 – Who is a ‘saintly faith hero’ for you, one who you have seen act out the ‘proclamation practices’ bullet points on the previous page.

May we all do something similar.

Pastor Steve

FOUR – Return to the audio of Holden Evening Prayer