

Holy Trinity Parish

Dear friends of God,

This week I will be spending some time away on a bit of a vacation and some time to meditate and hike. I am going to be enjoying the temple of God's natural world manifested in Great Smokey Mountain National Park. Our National Parks are an important gift that we have as Americans. I've never been there, and I am looking forward to this time. Please keep me in your prayer.

I want to thank those who are attending Mass for wearing masks and social distancing. I realize that this is a struggle for so many of us, but it is a way for us to truly love our neighbor even when we are six feet away from our neighbor. There is a gift hidden during this time, knowing that all of us in the human family are struggling with this together. Covid-19 doesn't discriminate. The universal nature of this time of struggle reminds us that our world is large and small at the same time.

As people of faith, let us take consolation from the words of St. Paul this weekend,

What will separate us from the love of Christ?
Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or
famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?
No, in all these things we conquer
overwhelmingly through him who loved us.

Even this blasted virus will not separate us from the love of God. It is my hope that we will respond to this challenging time and learn to love in the way that God desires us to love: unconditionally, unreservedly, nonviolently and freely.

This Thursday is the Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord. It is the day we remember when Jesus and his disciples Peter, James and John were walking on (maybe even hiking on) "...a very high mountain." You might want to take some time on this day and read Matthew's telling of this story found in Matthew 17:1-9. This would be a lovely way to enter into the sacredness of this day by praying with the words that Matthew gives us about the holy encounter of Jesus with Moses and Elijah. As Jesus was traveling to Jerusalem there was a moment of Divine motivation for both Jesus and his disciples as they heard the Father say, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." This motivational moment from our Maker is also meant for us. We are to listen to Jesus. We are to follow where he calls us even though that might mean that we ourselves will travel to Calvary on the way to our own resurrection. We need to follow this path in the same way as Jesus: with peace in our hearts, in our words and in our actions. This is something counter-cultural in our violent world.

On August 6th and 9th we remember the 75th anniversary of the Atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The Church has consistently challenged the use of these weapons of mass destruction. Pope Francis, when visiting Nagasaki, Japan last year offered these prophetic words:

In a world where millions of children and families live in inhumane conditions, the money that is squandered and the fortunes made through the manufacture, upgrading, maintenance and sale of ever more destructive weapons, are an affront crying out to heaven.

As we celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration, we are reminded of this Godly breaking into our reality with the Divine Reality of the God of love who calls us to allegiance to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is our King and we are called to follow the Prince of Peace and that means we need to put down our swords (and our bombs).

It is difficult to believe that we are beginning August. It is too early to tell what our world might look like this fall as we continue to move forward amidst this pandemic, but let us not forget to take time to enjoy the summer weather, those we love and our world that God has given to us as our common home.

May God bless you and our world with peace and all good things.

Much love,

H. Ken

