

Pastor's Note 2008

Greetings in Christ,

He Is Risen!!! He Is Risen indeed, Alleluia!!!

Have you lost anything? In life we find ourselves always confronted with loss of something or someone that we really like, love, care for, or are fond of. We are not absent minded, it is just the natural process in life to experience loss. When we review our life we can see this process over and over again. As a child we loose our baby teeth, we loose favorite toys or we out grow them. That favorite aunt or grandparent doesn't seem to be around anymore when we reach our teen years. As we grow older we start to loose our innocence or naiveté an ignorance of things that are better not to know. We loose heroes as they become more human in our eyes. We loose friends because we move, they move, or one of us hurt the other and there was no forgiveness or reconciliation. We loose childhood freedom as we enter the world of adulthood, work and or marriage. We loose touch with family members as we grow older and our role in a family moves from child to parent to grand parent or some variation of that sequence. We loose our youth as joints start to ach, Eyes start to grow clouded, and memory starts to fade. Scripture gives us clear reflections of the reality of the regular process of loss in our lives. This constant reality and cycle of loss is lamented in Ecclesiastes chapter one verse nine "***What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.***" of course this has a broader meaning than just about loss but it applies to loss as well.

So what is the source of this continual loss in life? We must acknowledge that all pain and suffering in life, even the pain of a small and natural loss, is because we live in a sinful broken world. God's perfect world had no loss in it, no pain, no suffering. However there are good reasons not to lament loss. Some losses are painful and we must naturally grieve over them but we do not have to relive the pain over and over by recounting painful things of the past like a dog licking its wounds. Just like everything else grieving has its place, loosing a loved one will take more time to process emotionally than the loss of a favorite thing or not getting our way in a family dispute.

Paul however considers everything lost or unimportant compared to the love of Christ. He says this in his letter to the Philippians. Chapter 3 verse 8 "***What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ*** "

So if we look at our life and or losses, we should consider the gains that followed or were a result of the losses. When we loose baby teeth, we gain better adult teeth, when we loose older family members we often also gain young new ones. When we loose youth and our heroes we gain experience, wisdom and confidence. When we loose friends because we move, we gain new ones in our new locations. When we loose our pride and forgive others we regain our old friends. When we loose childhood freedom we gain adulthood freedom and fuller deeper adult relationships. When we loose touch with our youth we gain wisdom and a life full of wonderful experiences.

But none of these compare to the greatest loss of all, the loss of Good Friday. This was followed by the greatest gain of all, victory over sin death and the devil. Redemption for all mankind paid for by Christ and celebrated on Easter morning.

So no mater what we loose as we transition from who and what we are as Saint Paul Lutheran Church, we are sure to gain, if we seek to do Gods will in the process. As long as we are rightly administering the sacraments and take head to God's word rightly preached and pray for His guidance in all decisions, we can rest in the assurance of His word.

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In His name

Pastor Portier