

*Even so we also should walk in newness of life*

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Trinity season is meant to be a season of growth into Christian maturity. This is why the color for our vestments and altar hangings is green, the color of new growth. The Collects, Epistles and Gospels for this season have much to teach us, but especially for our day to day lives as we strive to follow Jesus. This Sunday we continue in this journey, and we are reminded particularly of our obligation and duty as Christians, our obligation and duty as baptized members of the Church. We are reminded that through Baptism God sets us apart from the world. We have been baptized into Jesus' death, and having passed through the waters of Baptism we have passed from an old way of life into the new way of life. We are called to a new way of living, to live as Christians, a life marked by Jesus Christ.

Yet this requires that we continually turn from our old ways and habits, from our old ingrained sinful ways and towards the life God wishes us to have. C. S. Lewis reminds us of this in his book *Mere Christianity*, he writes, *The real problem of the Christian life comes where people do not usually look for it. It comes the very moment you wake up each morning. All your wishes and hopes for the day rush at you like wild animals. And the first job each morning consists simply in shoving them all back; in listening to that other voice, taking that other point of view, letting that other larger, stronger, quieter life come flowing in. And so on, all day. Standing back from all your natural fussings and frettings; coming in out of the wind. We can only do it for moments at first. But from those moments the new sort of life will be spreading through our system: because now we are letting Him work at the right part of us...When He said, "Be perfect," He meant it. He meant that we must go in for the full treatment.*

That *other voice, that other point of view, that stronger, and quieter life* that C. S. Lewis is referring to is the life that we find in the Gospels, the Life of Jesus Christ. We get in touch with that life through the Grace of God in His Sacraments, through prayer and worship, but it requires a relationship with Jesus and knowledge of the Gospel. Seeking forgiveness of our sins, burying the old grudges with our brothers and sisters, living a life at peace with God and others is to give way to *that other point of view, that stronger, and quieter life*, which is Jesus Christ. How often have we shut God and His point of view out of our lives? How often have we failed to listen to God's *still small voice*? How easy is it to come to Mass on Sunday and then go back to a godless life the rest of the week? We must pray as

our collect for this morning says so beautifully, *pour into our hearts such love toward thee, that we, loving thee above all things, may obtain thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire.* Make no mistake, the collect and lessons for today are intended to remind us that we who claim to be Christians are called to a new way of life. The old family grudges, rivalries, bitterness, habits and tempers, these must all be thrown out to make room for Jesus Christ. Through Baptism Jesus has buried us to the old way of life, a life so loved and encouraged by the world, and raised us to the new life which pleases God and which the world despises.

We must allow the life of Jesus Christ to transform us, and what a gift we have been given through the Sacraments. We have been given the wonderful opportunity to live a sacramental life constantly being brought further and further into the life of Christ through Holy Communion and Confession and all the Sacraments of the Church. We can experience the peace and goodness of God through these sacraments, God can transform our lives through these Sacraments, if we let Him. But we have to let God in, we have to welcome God into our lives and push all our wishes and hopes, our fussings and frettings out of the way. Whatever does not line up with Jesus Christ must be thrown out. This even means our fears and anxieties. We signed up for this when we were Baptized and Confirmed, we renew it every Sunday when we receive the body and blood of Christ through Holy Communion, and truly, even in the chaos of our world, this is the only way to live. Amen.