

Homily for October 8, 2017
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The Collect (pg. 234 Proper 22 Please read it with me)

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and to give more than we either desire or deserve: Pour upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things for which we are not worthy to ask, except through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Savior; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and to give more than we either desire or deserve

Preaching today is very difficult for me. In light of the recent natural disasters and man initiated events one has to ask “AND WHERE IS GOD IN ALL OF THIS?”

Category 4 and 5 hurricanes, Harvey, Irma, and Maria, laying a path of death and destruction over two states and the Caribbean islands. An earthquake in Mexico killing hundreds. A mass shooting in Las Vegas killing 58 and injuring over 500 people , and other recent acts of violence in this country and in the world.

HOW CAN I PREACH ON THE READINGS OF TODAY AND NOT RELATE THEM TO OUR LIVES?

EXODUS 20 You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

What idols have we created for ourselves, knowingly or unknowingly, that lead us away from God? (a car, big screen TV or maybe the latest cell phone) Are we being distracted to the point of not paying attention to what is going on in the world?

Matthew 21

Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures:
“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone”

I took some time to look up the definition of “cornerstone”. This is what I found,
The cornerstone is the first stone set in the construction of a masonry foundation, important since all other stones will be set in reference to this stone, thus determining the position of the entire structure. (Is Jesus our benchmark or reference point for Christianity?)

A stone placed at the corner of a building during a ceremony to mark the start of construction. (I can think of two ceremonies. Christmas and Easter.)

A person of prime importance; (Seems to be quite obvious)

The cornerstone(basis)of the whole argument. (Is Jesus not the basis for the argument of what is Christianity?)

Architectural term ... the cornerstone on which all the building depends. In biblical times, a cornerstone was used as the foundation and standard upon which a building was constructed. Once in place, the rest of the building would conform. (Seems to me that Christianity may have missed the point here.)

THE QUESTION FOR ME TODAY. Is Jesus the cornerstone of my life? Do I have a life rooted in Jesus or do I lead a dual life? A Christian life when I feel it applies and a secular life (in the workplace or in politics for example) when I think Christian values need not apply.

Two of the definitions I cited a moment ago are important here. A physical stone and a person of importance. When you come to church do you look for a physical stone? Do we even have one at St. George's? (Does anyone here know?) Does the church having (or not having) a physical cornerstone mean anything to you? How many Christians regard the building as an important part of their worship?

Do you need to see the person of Jesus? (Maybe a picture or a statue) Is that why you are here are here?

For me, a physical rock is not my cornerstone. A picture of Jesus is not my cornerstone.

The CROSS is my cornerstone. I see Jesus in the cross and more than that I see the Love of Jesus in that cross. I see a way to live my life. I hear a "revolutionary" Jesus saying "LOVE FOR ALL" IS THE ONLY TRUE WAY TO ETERNAL LIFE.

I do not see the cross as an idol to stand or kneel before. I see a way of life. I hear Jesus saying DO NOT kneel or stand before a cross that is supposed to represent my love but does not.

As we know there are Christian denominations who say "Gays are not welcome here", or "Women are not allowed in the ministry" or "Even though you are a baptized Christian you are not welcome at the table of the Lord?

Jesus is saying to me "Do not kneel before that cross" "It is not the true cross (cornerstone).

Matt 16:24 TAKE UP YOUR CROSS AND FOLLOW ME.

Matt 16:27 FOR THE SON OF MAN WILL REWARD EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO WHAT HE HAS DONE.

SPEAK UP AGAINST INJUSTICE. DO NOT SIT IDLE. TAKE ACTION AGAINST INJUSTICE. JESUS DID! Have you marched against injustice? (my wife has). Have you attended a vigil for lives lost?

WHEN THERE IS HURTING IN THE WORLD BE QUICK TO HELP AND COMFORT IN ANYWAY YOU CAN. JESUS CERTAINLY DID. (Jim Roscoe went to Huston with the Red Cross, many of us have donated to a relief fund (St. George will match your donation to certain relief funds).

Yes life has been tough the past few months.

HAVE YOU TAKEN UP YOUR CROSS?

If you have you will "LIVE ONE LIFE" A LIFE OF FOLLOWING JESUS. (The true cornerstone) YOU WILL DO WHAT JESUS WOULD DO.

AMEN