

6/28/18

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Many runners experience what is called a “second wind” or sometimes a “runner’s high.” Just when their bodies are feeling the most fatigued, a renewed energy comes over them. This happens because the body stops focusing on expelling excess carbon dioxide and begins taking in more oxygen. The result is a fresh confidence that runners will be able to finish the race, when just moments before they might have been ready to call it quits.

There are a couple of problems with the runner’s high, however. First, it’s unpredictable for most runners. It may come after 10-15 minutes of running, after five miles, or perhaps not at all. Also, the second wind is not renewable endlessly. Sooner or later the runners’ strength gives out completely and they are forced to stop running.

...those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Isaiah 40:31

The Bible compares the Christian life to running a race. It began with our rebirth in baptism and it ends with our victory celebration with the Lord in heaven. But the race is long. For most of us it is closer to a marathon than a sprint. And there are so many unexpected twists and turns along the way. All the while the devil is a stitch in our side, trying to convince us to give up, to give in to temptation or fear or doubt. Left to our human strength alone, the distance and the obstacles would be too much for even the greatest of us and we would never reach our heavenly goal.

“But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.” Trusting our loving God, we are strengthened with a “second wind.” Through his Word and through the Sacraments, God gives us his Holy Spirit and assures us that our sins are forgiven. We can turn our focus away from earning God’s love and instead breathe in the good news that Christ Jesus our Savior has gone ahead of us to prepare rooms for us in heaven. Renewed by the Spirit we can keep running towards our waiting Savior’s arms and not grow weary. We can walk even through the valley of the shadow of death and not be faint.

***Prayer:** Dear heavenly Father, I am weary and weak, worn out by the troubles of this world. But my hope is in your Son Jesus who became weak so that in him I might find strength. Amen.*

(WELS E-Devotion, Adapted)

...See you in worship.

Keep looking up because the Lord is always looking down – Psalm 121

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