

An amazing day in history; marked by the courageous, brave, and cowards. 100 yrs ago now. At the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month, brave men laid down their arms, peace declared in the Great War to end all wars, sadly WW1 would not be the last. This is Armistice Day, until 1954 a congressman from Emporia, Ks introduced legislation this day would honor all our brave, courageous sons and daughter, who served and fought and died for our country (may God rest their souls) that we could have the life and freedoms we now enjoy. Due to this Emporian, this is Veterans Day. But this day has other amazing historical notes.

In 336, a Roman war hero named Martin; fighting, in an area now Worms Germany. Converts to Christianity, then in what he sees as an immoral war, states, "I am a soldier of Christ, I cannot fight." The courage to not "just following orders" that were immoral. Martin was jailed, accused of being a coward. So he offers, to stand unarmed at the front of the battle to show his courage for what is right. Just before this takes place, the German barbarians dispersed, no battle was fought. Martin later becomes a pastor, the leader in Tours, France. He courageously fought against a growing, powerful heresy in the Church call Arianism, (it denied Jesus as God) He along with church leaders, like St. Nicholas (who's the historical basis for Santa) in 381 created the Scriptural truth of the NC we just confessed. Martin dies on this day 397; and since, Nov. 11, a day of commemoration of St. Martin of Tours.

And almost 1100 yrs later, on this day, Hans and Margarete, take their 1 day old son to the church for baptism, give him the birth name of this day's commemoration, thus he is call, Martin, Martin Luther; who coincidently makes a historical stand in Worms, Germany in 1521; courageously face death for what was right as he confessed God's truths amid heresy.

And this day, in the Church's historical lectionary, we encounter 2 widows, showing great courage as the trust their very life in God's hands, amid a crowd of cowards. Cowards, like us. Sure, we at times can be brave, courageous. But what other conclusions can we honestly come to, as we heard the OT, Gospel reading. Cowards, every one.

You've been given the assurance of eternal life thru unchanging, unfailing promise of God in your baptism. Through the power of the Word, the work of the Holy Spirit in you, God will complete all that He has begun in you. You have the testimony of the Prophets, Apostles who bear inspired, infallible witness that God took on our humanity in order to become sin for you so that you might become the righteousness of God. And as if that weren't enough, you have the very body of Christ, crucified for you, His blood, shed for you, upon your lips, over and over and over again for the assurance that all that is His is most certainly yours.

Yet, even with all this, in the warfare of life, you're worrisome, trust more in your ability and bank account for your care, your safety -than simple trust in our Lord's work. You live by faith, but you don't want faith to cause you to be too uncomfortable, too inconvenienced or suffer, or face rejection, or feel awkward to courageously speak of Christ, or to deny yourself anything. You hedge your bets and think 'what if this happens', fail to fully trust Christ when you make decisions. Cowards. Repent.

The main point of the widow's story is not that you are to be *like* this poor widow, but realize -you *are* a poor widow. Your entire, day-to-day existence in the battles of life is dependent upon Him. For whatever you have in this world, little or plenty, spiritually you're a poor widow; your sin has made it so. The perfect marriage of God and His bride in the Garden was destroyed by sin - each sin, evidence of your rebellion; each sin, showing cowardice that God is not dependable, not good, not doing enough good, holding out on you, or won't provide what you need.

And if your offering of devotion, time, money for Him has been tight, thoughtless stingy, His offering for you has been intentional, overflowing. His offering fills the Church's treasury with *His holy precious blood, innocent suffering and death*, an offering for your sin on the cross. He gives all He is; all that He has. The One who came to be the Bridegroom for us poor widows; for you who can't keep yourself alive- to wash you clean, tend to you, make you pure Bride again.

As Jesus sat in the Temple that day the world saw a poor widow, putting into the treasury nothing that would matter, make a difference, Jesus saw His Bride trusting her existence, life to Him, putting in all she had, not because she had to, but because she could. Not to receive God's favor, or win God's love, but because it was already hers. She loves with the love that's been given to her; she's richest of all; a Bride of Christ.

The same for you. You may be someone in this world or no one. You may be heralded for the life you live, remembered in history, by many, even have your birthday remembered, or you may be soon forgotten as if you ever lived. You may make a useful difference in this world or have nothing useful to offer. But Jesus sees in you what the world cannot see: His Bride. For you He has come. He marks each day for you in His love, His feast, His forgiveness, without limits. Like the widows, you are the richest ones of all. Rich in faith, rich in true treasures; rich in Him.

In your sin, poor, cowardly- still -you are His beloved, He served and fought and died and now lives that you have eternal life and freedom according to His Word that you now enjoy. Gives you courage in His Word, Sacraments, to bravely fight the good fight of faith here. The Father sees you as a soldier of Christ, veteran of the cross, brave sons and daughters, His glory, His honor is to call you His. Amazing day in history, baptismally for what God has done for Cora and what He is still doing in you.