

The CPC e-Pistle

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KEN'S KORNER: With all of the tinsel, lights, well-wishing and gift-giving of the season now coming to a climax, I think that we do well to consider some of the realities of the Gospel which seem to be pushed to the wings during the festival fullness. Isaiah prophesies a mysterious Suffering Servant who somehow saves the world by suffering for it. Not only does he suffer, he has the added affliction of being marred and ugly. (Isaiah 52:14, "He had no comeliness that we should look upon him and no beauty that we should desire him...he was despised and rejected of men.")

It makes you think of the grossly overweight woman who struggles into a mart-cart to buy her groceries. Or perhaps the acne-scarred teenager sitting in embarrassed loneliness at the high school prom. Maybe the skeletal AIDS patient sitting on the Bay Street sidewalk with a styrofoam coin cup between his ankles. They, too, like the Suffering Servant, are men and women "of sorrow and acquainted with grief. (Isaiah 53:3b)

I can't help but wonder to what extent their ugliness has led them to be despised and rejected and, by extension, to despise and reject themselves. Who knows whether their acquaintance with grief will open their hearts also to the grieving of others or whether it will turn their hearts to stone? But for the sake of the One Who bore it before they did, we are to honor them for the holiness of their burden. For His sake, we are called to see their terrible beauty.

When we do this, perhaps we can once more hear the voice of the Archangel Gabriel declaring God's blessing of peace to all people and the response of the Holy Ones as they declare in Heaven's Chorus, "Gloria in excelsis deo!"

I bid you peace!

Ken

STORMING HEAVEN'S GATES: Al Jordan (Father of Kim Hammonds); Frank Wood; Kaley Stunkard; Kay and Sam's brother Max McVicker; Dorita D'Alto; "Sam" Sutherland; Kay Jensen; Kenneth Burnsey (neighbor of Rick and Cindy Wade); and the Rev'd Dr. Heahwan Rim, our former Synod Executive.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP: Celebrating the Nativity of the Lord will take place on Sunday, December 24 at 10 AM and 6 PM. Please plan to come and join us for these holy and joyful times in the life of our congregation!

WORDS OF WISDOM: *Attics mutely speak the truth that a family is more than the individuals who inhabit a structure at a given moment. Families are a complex web of lives stretched across years and generations. An attic's contents – forgotten treasurers, souvenirs of long-ago times, belongings once possessed by a deceased aunt, grandparent or cousin – serve to remind us that we are part of a larger, organic whole. They tease us into the mystery that our lives are not bounded but extensive; that our identity does not end at the outline of our silhouette but is, in fact, much larger, more generous, more expansive than our present vision would allow.*

Wendy Wright, "Sacred Dwellings" 1986, Simon and Schuster