



The St. John's Communicator

March 20, 2020

Roser's Reflection . . .

Dear Friends,

For many Americans right now, contracting the coronavirus is not their greatest concern. Of course, somewhere in the back of people's minds is the lingering thought "I sure hope I don't get it" but the urgency of other pressures pushes that thought aside. Many businesses and workplaces have needed to close in order to stop the spread of this disease. For the owners and workers alike, what this means is an abrupt stoppage of their incomes. In the face of such a crisis, health concerns take a backseat to more pressing questions. "How long will this last?" "How are we going to pay our rent or mortgage?" "What are we going to do about childcare now that the schools are closed?" "Will we continue to find formula for the baby throughout this ordeal?" While the run on toilet paper has provided no shortage of amusement to television audiences and purveyors of Facebook memes, what lies behind this is the fear that we may become deprived of life's basic supplies. People are desperately trying to prepare themselves and their families for an uncertain future. This fear is certainly not lost on our senior citizens who are cautioned against entering public spaces. Examining the lethal effects of this virus upon those aged 60 and older we recognize that such warnings come from sound judgment. Many of our older neighbors are gripped with anxiety as they consider "how am I going to get my medicine?" "Do I have enough groceries to last for a week or so?" "What if my pet becomes ill?" "What impact is this going to have on my grandchildren?" For families with loved ones in care facilities, the anxiety is even greater. The worry over the welfare of their loved ones who most likely already have compromised health conditions is compounded by their inability to visit them. I am not going to probe here the questions many of them are asking, as I think that the unspoken worries that they are feeling are too painful for some of us to imagine. Additionally, this pandemic didn't begin during an international holiday when everyone was safe at home. Consequently, many people are now separated from their families without the capacity to return home at this time. In addition to those suffering from this deadly virus - and I do not take their suffering lightly - are thousands of people bearing up under tremendous stress, fears, and pain.

As a parish pastor, I have spent a lot of time over the years with people who are grieving. Many times they complain about things that they catch themselves doing or the behavior of loved ones. When this is discussed, my most common response is "people do funny things with their grief." My point is that the pain of grieving often brings out odd, unsettling, and unwanted behaviors and feelings. There is no point in trying to rationalize irrational behavior driven by grief. In the same way, there is little value in becoming fixated on the hoarding impulses of our neighbor or the many things that we do that upset one another during a time of tremendous stress.

As Jesus reclined at table with his disciples before he was arrested, he told them "Do not let your heart be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to be with me, so that you may also be where I am. You know where I am going, and you know the way." (John 14:1-4). Read by themselves, these verses sound beautiful and idyllic. Read in their context (what's going on at the time) they have a greater punch. As Jesus' disciples sit around him, they are most likely gripped by agonizing fear. Perhaps asking themselves, "what's going to happen to me when they come for Jesus?" "Will I be tortured?" "Will they hunt down my family?" "Will I be able to endure what comes next?" Jesus' words to them do not imply "don't worry about it - it's all good." What he is saying to them instead is "in the midst of your fears do not let the pressure overtake you. You need some long-term perspective in order to get through this." Jesus says to them "as you go through some really painful stuff [and everyone does or will] don't think for a minute that you run the risk of being completely destroyed. No matter what happens to you - or could happen - you who believe in me have an ultimate home in heaven which nothing down here can take away from you." It is normal for us to be fearful of an uncertain future looming with difficulties, but in the midst of that struggle, I pray that the Holy Spirit will comfort you in your Savior. Never forget that Christ your God who suffered for you upon the Cross also suffers with you in the day-to-day and will never leave you.

In Christ Jesus,

Pastor





**Pastor Dennis Roser and Pastor Dan Eddy
together...6 feet apart**



**St. John's Lutheran Church
and Messiah Lutheran Church
are streaming Worship live
Sundays at 9:00 a.m.**

Social-distancing or self-quarantining for safety doesn't have to mean giving up your time with God and His Word. The interactive parts of the service will be shown on screen, so everyone can easily follow along.

Members and Non-members are invited to log in:

<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnslutheranbeloit/> or
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCw9-9SrlBpZwdB2bPj-7Stg>

Please join us!

"Let us also consider carefully how to spur each other on to love and good works. Let us not neglect meeting together, as some have the habit of doing. Rather, let us encourage each other, and all the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Calling all graduates!

In early Summer we'll celebrate those who are graduating this year from high school or college. If you have someone you would like us to include, please provide Berta with their name and the school from which they're graduating.
Thank you.

Dear St. John's Members,

As I'm sure you're all aware, the COVID-19 virus has had a major impact on scheduled activities in all areas. In light of the safety precautions now being taken, the decision has been made to regretfully cancel several more events and plans.

Our upcoming **Scoopie Nights**, sponsored by the Youth on March 24th and the Women's Guild on the 31st, are cancelled.

All **Dartball** games have been cancelled for the remainder of the season.

We will not be taking orders for **Easter Flowers**. With Worship being held via the internet, it makes it difficult to distribute the order forms and receive the payment. Money for orders already received will be returned. If, as we hope, we are able to hold a joyous in-person service for Easter Morning, we will most assuredly acquire some flowers to place in the Sanctuary.

There will not be an **Easter Breakfast**, regardless of whether or not we have an Easter Morning Service.

We know these are difficult times, and the adjustments and cancellations are frustrating. But God is with us, and we will get through it.

My soul, rest quietly in God alone,
for my hope comes from him.
He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress.
I will not be disturbed.
My salvation and my honor depend on God, my strong rock.
My refuge is in God.
Trust in him at all times, you people.
Pour out your hearts before him.
God is a refuge for us.
(Psalm 62:5-8 EVH)

God's Blessings

Berta Eddy



Did you know if you miss a regular Sunday Worship Service, you can watch it in its entirety on YouTube!

Just use this link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCw9-9SrlBpZwdB2bPj-7Stg>

**The St. John's Women's Guild
is collecting shampoo and
conditioner on behalf of
Caritas from now until the
end of March.**



**Please place your
contribution in the
box in the Narthex.
Thank you.**



Who Wants to Win a Culver's Gift Card?

We have a number of avenues we use to keep you apprised of the opportunities and events here at St. John's: The monthly Messenger, the weekly Communicator, the Facebook page, the Web page, the Sunday Bulletin, and (first and foremost) the Worship service. Many times we will repeat the information in more than one of the venues in an effort to make sure the information is reaching everyone. But how can we tell if the announcements we're providing are getting through and being remembered?

How about by playing a little game each month!

The last weekend of the month, watch for a list of four questions whose answers can be found in the one or more of the Messenger, Communicator, Sunday Bulletin, Facebook page, Web page, or during the Worship Service during that month. Submit the answers either in writing or by email to the church's Administrative Assistant by noon the following Friday, and a winner will be drawn from the entries with the correct answers. The winner gets a gift card for some delicious Culver's food!

Prayers for those in need of physical or spiritual healing:

Reverend Bill Wagner, Roger Nelson, Dan Carter, Katherine Pettit, Ruth Peterson, Karen Nohr, Brad Carter, Lester Nyborg, Paula Devlin, Keith Stowers, Ed Spychalski, Jon Turner, Bobbie Reynolds, Mike Papini, Tom Wulf, Doris Rindfleisch, Carl Colby, Joaquin, Sandy Smith, Marcie Moore, Laura Jo Pearson, Cayden Krueger, Janice Hemerley, and all of our members who are homebound, those who serve in the military (particularly Kyle Summers and Logan Davies), emergency services, and all who work for the common good.

**Who of you by worrying
can add a single hour
to your life?**

**Since you cannot do this
very little thing, why do
you worry about the rest?**

Luke 12:25-26

Thrivent Choice Dollars!

The deadline for directing your Thrivent Choice Dollars is fast approaching. If you have not yet done so, please either log in to your account or contact your Thrivent representative to direct your Choice Dollars.
St. John's appreciates your help and support.



The CD ministry last week was sponsored by Larry and Marlene Nolta in thanks and celebration of God's Blessings.

The CD ministry this week is sponsored by Beth M. Schmuck in memory of loved ones