



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast for October 31, 2021

“I took root in an honored people...”

Wisdom ... tells of her glory in the midst of her people “... my Creator ... He gave me a resting place, and in Jerusalem was my domain. I took root in an honored people, in the portion of the Lord, his heritage. I grew tall like a cedar in Lebanon, and like a cypress on the heights of Hermon. I grew tall like a palm tree in En-gedi [a fresh water spring], and like rosebushes in Jericho; like a fair olive tree in the field, and like a plane tree beside water I grew tall.” [from Ecclesiasticus 24:1-22]

The Praise of Wisdom

So far, our scripture readings about trees have focused on how the characteristics of trees – resilience, fruit-bearing, provider of help, and so forth – as guides for living life as God meant us to live. God would have humankind adopt the best qualities of trees to realize how we should live in relation to God and to our neighbors.



This portion of Ecclesiasticus is about Wisdom, with a capital “W”! This Wisdom has a divine origin and is not the same as worldly wisdom. It is the Wisdom St. Paul talks about in 1 Cor:4 “*And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power...*”: the power of God’s Wisdom. This Wisdom is directly from God – the ultimate Wisdom. In Ecclesiasticus Wisdom descends upon honored people and takes root, and its spiritual fruits emerge just as the fruits of cedars, cypresses, palm trees, rosebushes, olive trees, all trees growing beside water. True Wisdom, knowledge of, love of, and service to God, makes us thrive and bear fruits. Our fruits, then, are shared with all of humankind and Creation.

Our lives are made up of challenges and choices, and yet God’s Wisdom stands ready to support and guide us, but “*If any of you is lacking in Wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you.*” (James 1:5) May we all bear spiritual fruits, spiritual gifts through God’s Wisdom in our relationships with our neighbors. Let us act like “honored people.”

A Ten Finger Prayer?

“I am blessed like God’s trees: so may I live.”

“May all creation be blessed by God’s Wisdom and Grace.”

Please keep trees in your personal devotions this week... (according to the news) “the [California] park service said ... that 10,000 trees along the Generals Highway, the main road through the park, are considered a hazard and need to be removed. ‘Hazard trees -- weakened by drought, disease, age, and the current fire -- have a high probability to fail in part or whole and have the potential to strike people, cars, other structures, or create barriers to emergency response services...’ ”

All Saints Day: November 1

All Saints' Day (also known as All Hallows' Day or Halloween) is the day after All Hallows' Eve (Hallowe'en). It is a feast day celebrated on 1st November, and on All Saints Day the Christian Church looks back and gratefully remembers the lives of our predecessors in faith.

Remembering saints and martyrs and dedicating a specific day to them each year has been a Christian tradition since the 4th century CE (common era), but it wasn't until 609 CE that Pope Boniface IV extended the remembrance to all martyrs. Originally May 13 was designated as the Feast of All Holy Martyrs. Later, in 837 CE, Pope Gregory IV extended the festival to remember all the saints, changed its name to Feast of All Saints and changed the date to November 1.



All Saints Day: Scripture Lessons for Today: *Isaiah 25:6-9, Psalm 24, Revelation 21:1-6a, John 11:32-44*

Since All Saints Day is about looking back gratefully, we find today's scripture puts our recollections in the context of the future: we convert our recollections of the past into hope for the future. And, this is a hope that is not just cosmic – the creation of a new heaven and a new earth – but also this hope is very personal.

In Isaiah, we see that God does not forget our basic needs in the new Creation, especially to eat: "...*the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,...*" This is indeed a hope for those who daily have trouble in this life putting food on the table. Both Isaiah and Revelation declare our future is without human grief, as our Creator God will bring an end to tears and even death itself. For all who have experienced grief – and I believe that is everyone – this a remarkable promise. Psalm 24 joyfully welcomes God and the new Creation:

*"The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world and all who dwell therein.
Lift up your heads, O gates; lift them high, O everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.*

Our real future is salvation, characterized by living with God in God's new city. (Rev. 21:1-4)

But when? The age-old question. Jesus answers it this way:

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert..." (Mark 13:32-33)

In John Jesus has resurrected Lazarus from the dead four days after he died. It is an understatement to say that was an unexpected miracle! So will be Jesus' resurrection. *The point of this is beware, be alert, for the future can break into the present at any time.*

The End of the Church Year: Speaking of the Future...

This church year will end in a month, and Advent, the season before Christmas will begin in December – a new church year! With that in mind you will be hearing more about the "unexpected"! God's peace be with you. - Vance