



July 17, 2022

Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast

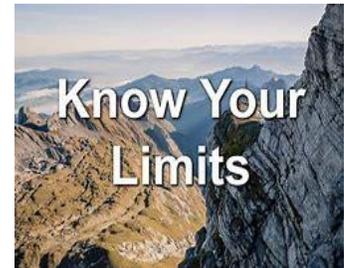
“Lord, Give Me Strength!”

O Lord, mercifully receive the prayers of your people who call upon you, and grant that they may know and understand what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to accomplish them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. (from Morning Prayer Daily Office)

This simple prayer is a powerful, two-part request: “Lord, help me to know and understand what I ought to do, and give me the strength to do it!” We are all familiar with the “give me strength” part, but how about the first part of the request: “help me to know and understand what I ought to do.”

There is a limit to what we can do.

Recently, Maggie told me of a conversation she had during which a very well-intentioned person asked: “Where do we draw the line between exercising Christian compassion and enabling needy behavior?” I suspect many of us have been in a similar situation. We don’t mind helping people in need, but at some point, we can be overwhelmed and start to wonder if we are doing the right thing. We think, “I can’t do this for much longer. Enough is enough,” but when we do, we feel guilty. Isn’t it our Christian duty to help those in need? Yes but: remember, we are not individually called to solve all the problems we encounter in life. We are called, however, to know and understand our roles in life, recognizing boundaries and our skills, and having the wisdom, strength, and grace to live as God’s people. Jesus made this very clear to the apostles and His disciples, including recognizing when they have reached their limits. (see Luke chapters 9 and 10).



Remember what Solomon asked of God?

... God appeared to Solomon and said to him, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you.” Solomon answered God, ... “Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours?” (2 Chron 1:7-10)

We might rephrase this as, “God, please give the *knowledge* of what I must do and the *wisdom* to discern how to accomplish it.” Like the prayer above, right?

Prayerful Wisdom.

Is it too bold to say, “there is wisdom in praying for wisdom”? Not at all, just as there is wisdom in prayer as a regular part of our lives. Prayer is a way of checking in with God, and it is most helpful when we start to question if we are still on the right track exercising our “Christian duty.” Psalm 119:105-6 tells us “Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that I will follow your righteous laws.” Prayer is the wise way to keep God’s lamp focused on our paths and showing us the way!

Let us keep in our prayers: those who are grieving; those suffering from extreme weather; victims of violence; those suffering from disease; those mourning for loved ones.