

**e - Votion**

e-Votion for Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Dear Friends,

Today I am reading Romans 5:12-19:

*Therefore just as sin came into the world through one man and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned--sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law.  Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.  But the free gift is not like the trespass.  For if the many died through one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many.  And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin.  For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification.  If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.  Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all.  For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience, the many will be made righteous.*

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One of my most powerful Ash Wednesday services EVER was silent.  A mime walked slowly up the aisle of the church, smiling and holding a picnic basket.  Her face was painted white, her clothes black, but her smile was bright.  She walked up the aisle, up the steps, up to the altar.  She looked at the congregation, then looked up at the cross, suspended from the ceiling.  And a normally rowdy bunch of people were quiet--you could have heard a pin drop.  She backed up to the edge of the steps and set her picnic basket down.  And then from behind the altar she took a small table and put it beside the basket, in the center front of the altar.  She took out a feather duster, carefully and slowly dusting the table's surface until it was clean.  And then she smiled.  She carefully opened the picnic basket and took out a tablecloth--red checked suitable for a picnic, and ever so carefully placed it on the table, followed by two candleholders, one at each end of the table.  Two red candles were then placed in the candleholders, and very carefully lit the candles.  Then she pulled out a tiny little vase and two little twigs in the shape of a cross.  She placed that at the center of her "altar."  Next, she pulled out a circular "wreath" made of vines with thorns.  She first placed it on her head, then on the cross-- a crown of thorns.. Her smile faded to tears.  She stepped back and examined her altar.  Seemingly satisfied, she returned to her picnic basket and pulled out a plate, followed by a loaf of bread, and covered it with a cloth.  THEN... she picked up the bread, wrapped in the cloth and held it like a baby--cradled it, hugged it and placed it back on the plate.  She took a step back, looked up at the cross and then at the table.  She picked up the bread once again, slid it in front of the cross, but under the crown of thorns.  Then she grasped the loaf of bread, and tore it in half.  She picked up a bottle out of her basket, lifted it up to the cross, and set it on the table.  She pulled a goblet out of her basket, poured the juice in the goblet, and lifted it up for all to see.  And then she smiled.  She put her basket behind the altar, pulled out a shiny wrapped box, lifted the lid and SMILED as she took out a sign that said "FOR YOU!"  She set it on the table, picked up her basket and silently left the sanctuary.



That was the beginning of Lent one year.  After she left, the choir sang, the ashes were imposed, the Lord's Supper was celebrated.  We acknowledged our sins and began the journey to Easter.   We received the greatest gift of all at the altar under the cross.  That says it!

Please pray:

* Please pray for Marilynn Barker Thank you for your prayers.  She is very ill and long time good friend of Karen Schmitt.  Her father was former principal at TA Dugger, Paul Pless.  He passed away in November.  Please remember Marilynn and her family in your prayers. (Karen Schmitt)
* Please pray for homeless, military and their families (Brian Milby)
* Please pray for Mike Cairnes and his wife Joy (Dedri Minultolo)

Calendar and Announcements:

* We need donations of children's board games for Family Promise.  We only had 2 children last week but we didn't have any games for them.
* ASH WEDNESDAY service tonight at 6:30, following Fellowship Supper.
* CHURCH COUNCIL meets Tuesday March 11 7 pm
* Tree Streets Food Forest Sunday March 16, 1-3 pm

 "Preach the gospel at all times and when necessary use words."

 -- St Francis of Assisi

Blessings,

Jane Taylor

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Johnson City TN