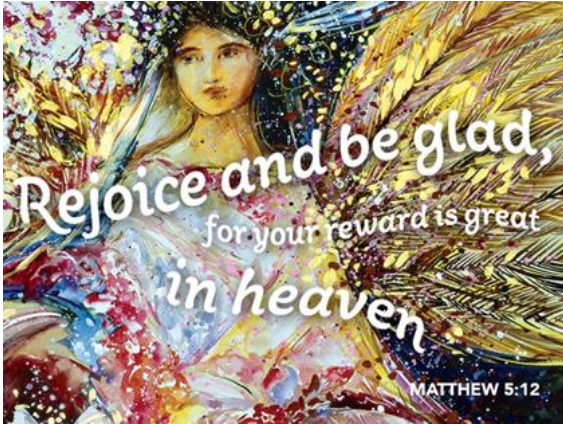


**Sunday, November 1, 2020**  
**All Saints' Sunday**  
**Grace Lutheran Church Somers Point, NJ 08244**  
**Interim Pastor: Rev. Kevin Hilgendorf**  
**“Pass It On”**



In pondering on All Saints Sunday, the title just surfaced gently to the top, “Pass It On.” Saints pass on their love for Christ to others they love. Just like my parents, family, teachers, friends, members of churches and others who shared the love of Christ with me. I do not remember her name the last time I visited the nursing home, but I remember the conversation. “Greetings (name) How are you?” She replied, “Amen!” I want to share a devotional with you. She said, “Amen!” Let me share a prayer, after the prayer she replied, “Amen!” And after the Lord's Prayer another amen followed. Then a blessing. “Amen!” she said. My final words, “God be with you till we meet again!” Her final word, “Amen!” One word of affirmation, Amen, Martin Luther translates, this is most certainly true!

I remember ☩ Betty Bloch who died this year during this covid19 pandemic from the church I retired. She was a pillar of the church; volunteered to be the church's secretary, and the church's organist. Involved in the woman's group and the prayer group and sang in the choir after they filled the organist position. She loved to sing, especially her favorite hymn, “Day by Day.” I taught the prayer group a simple prayer by the Quakers before we ate, “For this, for us, God Bless, amen!” It took a month to memorize. In turn I received Betty's go to everyday prayer in her hand writing, “Lord, I confess I am not what I ought to be, but I thank you Lord, that I am not what I use to be! Amen.”

☩ Russ a colleague along with others at our weekly study and discussion on the scriptures said, “The only verse in the Old Testament that mentions the righteous live by faith is Habakkuk 2:4. I remember that moment vividly. By Russ saying it out loud the word imprinted on my mind. Martin Luther commented on this verse, “The Godly people are waiting for the Lord therefore they live; therefore, they are saved, therefore they receive what has been promised. They receive it by faith because they give glory to the God of Truth, because they hold the Hand of the Lord.”

Where Jesus is, there is hope for the faithful. We stand on the shoulders of Saints and martyrs and beloved friends and family who have died, who for us have demonstrated the blessedness of those Jesus names in the Beatitudes. Libby Howe, director for evangelical mission and assistant to the bishop La Crosse Area Synod, ELCA says, "Blessings are not magic words that undo the pain of loss. They don't require us to quickly forget our losses. Neither are they directives of how to live or what to do. God's blessings are pure gift. God notices our pain and patiently coaxes our hearts open to receive God's healing love. God sees us exactly as we are, in our grief and longing, and gently blesses us with the resurrection promises of comfort and hope."

"A saint is never consciously a saint; a saint is consciously dependent on God," says Oswald Chambers. Pass it on, from his daughter, Linda, † Dan Reardon said, "less is more. You do not have to say a lot to get your point across. Less talk and more to the point." From listening to her family, †Jean Brock was tirelessly active in feeding the hungry. She generously in resources and time supported food pantries where ever she happened to be. †Mary Fischer was instructed along with others in the St. Stephen's Ministry at Grace and actively ministered to others, which Diana our church secretary informed me. A saint is consciously dependent on God. Pastor Muhlenberg's grave plaque states "Who and what he was future ages will know without a stone."

In his writing *The Presence*, Berthold Von Shenk shares, "When we are bereft of dear ones, it is a tremendous shock. For a time, we are stunned. Not everyone can feel at once their continuing companionship...we must come to a sense of the continuing presence of our loved ones, and we can do this if we realize the presence of our living Lord. As we seek and find our Risen Lord, we shall find our dear departed. They are with Him, and we find the reality of their continued life through Him. The Saints are a part of the Church. We worship with them. They worship our Risen Christ face to face, while we worship the same Risen Christ under the veil of bread and wine..." Remember the German proverb, "Those who love the Lord never see each other for the last time."

I learned this blessing from Community Church of Joy and pass it on to you, "Our loving Lord and Savior Jesus Christ go with you, go ahead of you to show you the way, go above you to watch over you, go beside you to be your Best Friend and be within you to fill you with everlasting peace, unconditional love and uncontainable JOY! Let the church say Amen!

Now the peace which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen!