

Message from Robin+

O God, whose blessed Son came into the world that he might destroy the works of the devil and make us children of God and heirs of eternal life: Grant that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves as he is pure; that, when he comes again with power and great glory, we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Our collect this week reminds us of our hope as children of God, and heirs of eternal life. It's a good one for us to pray this week following the election. As all good news in Christ does, it gives us hope and it calls us to action. That is the gift of the Gospel – when we hear it, when we really and truly comprehend it, we are emboldened to proclaim it.

I don't know where you are in the aftermath of election day. As I write this on Tuesday, people are voting and the winner won't be declared for a good while. Physically, emotionally, and spiritually we are in different places regarding the election results. As children of God may we be kind to one another whatever happens, and may we not allow our political views to divide us. Division is not healthy or comfortable and sometimes it isn't safe.

In the back of our Book of Common Prayer, on pages 854-855, there is a section of the Catechism entitled "The Church" and I think it's a good place for us to focus this week. We are as baptized people of God, before we are anything else, members of the Body of Christ. We are this before we are Republicans or Democrats, Presidents or Representatives, citizens or patriots. We are, according to *An Outline of the Faith*, the People of God, the New Israel, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, and the pillar and ground of truth. We are one Body, under one Head, our Lord Jesus Christ.

The catechism further reminds us that as the People of God (before we are people of the United States) we are the Church and we are holy because the Holy Spirit dwells within us and guides us to do God's work. Not our work, God's work. There is so much more in these two amazing pages and I encourage you to read through them. But as we move forward into the next four years, perhaps as the People of God we might focus not on the mission of one political party or another, but on the mission of the Church. What is that, you might ask? The mission of the Church is to restore all people - friends, enemies, neighbors, and people who are not at all like us – it is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. The Church (that's us!) does this as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love.

I think these are worthy things for our contemplation when our nation and our world are so divided. No matter who wins in this election, I pray you will set aside any sense of loss or grief, any resentment or anger, any pride or sense of triumph and join me in the ministry of the Church, the work of God. What is this ministry? It is to represent Christ and his Church; to bear witness to him wherever we may be; and, according to the gifts given to us, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world.

Regardless of the outcome of the election, we know that some among us will experience joy and sadness this week, hope and fear, relief and worry. We also know that the intensity of these emotions will be amplified by all of the other emotions and anxieties we are experiencing in this challenging year.

Please pray with me for God's blessing on ourselves, on our parish, on our community, and on our country. If you would like to meet with me for prayer or a pastoral conversation about any matter, election-related or otherwise, contact me and we will set up a time and place to talk.

No matter how things are in the moment, we are, most deeply within and at the center of our being, People of God and heirs of eternal life. Grant that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves as he is pure; that, when he comes again with power and great glory, we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom.