

The Funeral Divine Service of  
The Reverend Reinhold Robert Krueger, Pastor Emeritus  
Christ Lutheran – Platte Woods, MO  
September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Matthew 6:33

Dear family, friends, loved ones, and **parishioners** of our beloved Reinhold Robert – Pastor Krueger.

There are two things that are strange about the introduction to this sermon. First of all, no one called Pastor Krueger, Reinhold Robert. Even when he invited me to call him Bob (and yes, he did invite me to call him Bob) I still couldn't. His first name is Pastor. No, his name is Reinhold Robert. More about his name a little later. Second, in that brief introduction to the sermon I called all of you Pastor Krueger's parishioners. I didn't make a mistake. I say it that way because he said it that way, even in retirement. He said it that way from this very place when he preached back in June 2011 at our celebration of his 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination. I, the Sr. Pastor, was sitting right behind him and he did not hesitate to say to all of you, "You are my parishioners." The reason, because one who has fed the people with the Gospel for so long, because one who has loved the flock for 32 plus years, because God did not take him out of the office of the Holy Ministry when he retired – but rather he was give then title "emeritus" and would still serve God's children, he said it that way and he was right.

The text used for this solemn, tearful yet at the same time joyous celebration of resurrection is Matthew 6:33: "*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*" If you did not know, this was Pastor's confirmation verse. I read it in the King James Version – I'm sure the same version that was used when his pastor gave him this verse which he kept close to his heart all the days of his earthly life. I heard him many times – and perhaps you have too – counsel the lowly heart with these words, give guidance to the prideful, and even share an encouraging word to a green, no-nothing assistant pastor from a refinery town in Southern Illinois who had enough trouble with dressing himself in all this fancy garb... and the emphasis each time being, "*all these things shall be added unto you.*"

And did you see what happened? Did you hear how it always turned out? It wasn't Pastor's word that brought these gifts of comfort. It was always the Lord. His Word on the lips of His servant was the healing word. His Word of ownership and love that are so great that He wanted to give you these things comes through the servant's lips and service of one who by virtue of serving Christ, would serve and love and take ownership of you in the same way. "My fellow parishioners," is what he said. He said such things to you as your pastor out of great love for you. He said, even that word of law that you didn't like so much, out of great love for you. He gave you the best anyone could give... the forgiveness of sins won by Christ Himself on Good Friday, because of his great love for you and his love for his Lord.

Our Pastor Krueger loved his Lord, he loved his parish, and he loved his family. And, for the family, here we are again. Death really stinks. Death hurts. We know the sting of death quite intimately and it doesn't get any easier. It's so painful for us who have been left to pick up the pieces and go on. Our pastor has used that word of the Lord given to him... *all these things will be added unto you*... would be talking about the outpouring of love and forgiveness in times of great sadness and grief. From God's instrument the Lord revealed "what was added." And what was added was and still is GRACE. Undeserved grace that only God could give – it has no

memories of wrongs... It's just what it is... added GRACE to the broken hearted... to the sinner... to you and to Reinhold Robert Krueger.

Which brings us back to his name. Reinhold is a family name. It was the first name of pastor's great, great grandfather, his great grandfather and down the line to him, his son Reinhold Scott, and his grandson, Reinhold Tyler. A family name that none of us ever called him, and perhaps many of you didn't even know. But the Lord knew it. It was spoken loudly and clearly by Pastor Herbert Kohn on August 30<sup>th</sup>, 1936 at Nazareth Lutheran Church on the south side of Chicago. You see, not only did your Pastor Krueger love his Lord, Your Lord loved His child Reinhold Robert. On that day the Lord added his name among the elect at his baptism. The Lord called him His very own by the washing and renewal of the Holy Spirit. Before our Pastor could love our Lord, before he could love you, the Lord first loved him. And thank God that is the case. Leave it to God to take a skinny little curmudgeon of a man and make him a grand instrument for the sake of you, me and the church in which we have no idea how many lives have been touched by the Lord through this His now sainted child.

Beloved, *“Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.”* We could go on and on about a man who meant so much to all of us. But more and more is what he loved to tell you about – the Kingdom, the Savior – *“Seek ye first...”* Yes, on a day like today and on an occasion such as this, we might think our Pastor Krueger is the “main person”. But he isn't. And he wouldn't have it. Jesus, who led our procession this morning, is always the head of the Church. Our leader and pastor for a long time was still a shepherd under the good shepherd, Jesus Christ.

Beloved, for a long time, this was Pastor Krueger's Church. People even still say that to me. I say, it's my church. No, they are wrong and I am wrong... and our Pastor Krueger would correct it... It's CHRIST'S Church. And He, as the head of the Church, has now called His faithful servant home. Well done, good and faithful servant. Well done, pastor. Well done friend, dad, grandpa. The Lord used you well. Now you truly do have a peace that passes all understanding. Why? For this simple reason: thus saith the Lord! Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

+ Soli Deo Gloria +

Pastor T.C. Arnold