

Hello again everyone out there in cyber land! Welcome to Ponderings with PJ number three. I am still not quite exactly sure where these texts will be leading me for a sermon but one thing is for sure. There is quite a bit for us all to chew on with our lectionary assigned readings for this Sunday.

I am sure that everyone has, at one time or another, felt so overwhelmed that they are almost made immobile. We are all trying to figure out life now with the new rules about sheltering, and staying in place, and only essential workers and services staying open, and all that is going on with a highly contagious virus sweeping through the land. It has been hard for us, as a family, since we have now moved close enough, to not be able to go and visit our parents in Burlington and Bettendorf, Iowa. Rebekah has had to finish her winter term at Wartburg on line from a new context. Also, it has been very different moving to a new call, and area, without being able to begin to know you all through visiting etc. Our worship life together has been changed for the time being as we have been forced to become amateur filmmakers. We are also becoming “zoom” meeting experts on the internet. The learning curve is continuing as we speak!

So, as I have been encountering the texts, I am thinking that all of them, in one way or another, remind us that we are named and called “Child of God” in our baptism. That is where we can get our strength in the midst of a weird and strange time. I am being reminded of the old television show from the 1960’s, “Get Smart.” Many of you slightly more “mature” folks may remember the show. “KAOS,” was the evil organization that Maxwell Smart (Agent 86), Barbara Feldon as (Agent 99), and Edward Platt as Thaddeus the Chief were fighting against. Their organization, by the way, was called “CONTROL” We can see that we are in the midst of a very chaotic time and even though we have the opportunity to slow down a bit, our lives have still been upended from the norm of which we are used to being a part.

As that old show comedically pointed out to us, “Kaos/Chaos” was always present and even “Control” was in “Kaos/Chaos” most of the time trying to figure out how to get life back into control. If this Corona Virus episode in our lives at this time has pointed up anything for us, it is that we are completely, and utterly, out of control of our lives. Even though we think that we are our own agents - we really are not.

The assurance from our Sunday readings is that we are still known and claimed by God for service in daily life to our neighbors in the name of Jesus who says to the disciples who are huddled in fear, “Peace be with you” and “As the Father has sent me so I send you.” Go, therefore, and be the bearers of peace in an unrestful time as this. There are many and creative ways that this kind of ministry can still take place even as we care for our neighbor by staying away from them for the time being.

Hopefully, I will see you all in church sometime in the near future, but for now, be sure to tune into either the Faith and Grace website or Facebook page for worship this Sunday.