

## Easter #5

5-10-2020

J.V. Trautwein

### **Celebrate (Introduction)**

“As we continue to celebrate the fifty days of Easter, today’s gospel included Jesus promise that he goes to prepare a place for his followers in his Father’s house. Our baptism commissions us to share Jesus mission in the world. As 1<sup>st</sup> Peter reminds us, we are a holy people, called to proclaim the one who called us out of darkness into light. In words and deeds we bear witness to the risen Christ – our way, our truth, our life.”

### **Opening Hymn [“Morning Has Broken”](#)**

#### **Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16**

In you, O Lord, I seek refuge;  
do not let me ever be put to shame;  
in your righteousness deliver me.  
Incline your ear to me;  
rescue me speedily.  
Be a rock of refuge for me,  
a strong fortress to save me.  
You are indeed my rock and my fortress;  
for your name’s sake lead me and guide me,  
take me out of the net that is hidden for me,  
for you are my refuge.  
Into your hand I commit my spirit;  
you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.  
My times are in your hand;  
deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.  
Let your face shine upon your servant;  
save me in your steadfast love.

### **Hymn of Praise: [“Now Thank We All Our God”](#)**

#### **Prayer of the Day**

“Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.”

**1st Reading:** [Acts: 7:55-60](#)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:** [1 Peter 2:2-10](#)

**The Gospel:** [John 14:1-14](#)

## Hymn of the Day: [“O Word of God Incarnate”](#)

1. O Word of God incarnate,  
O Wisdom from on high,  
O Truth unchanged, unchanging,  
O Light of our dark sky:  
We praise You for the radiance  
That from the hallowed page,  
A lantern to our footsteps,  
Shines on from age to age.
  
2. The church from You, our Savior,  
Received the gift divine,  
And still that light is lifted  
O'er all the earth to shine.  
It is the sacred vessel  
Where gems of truth are stored;  
It is the heav'n-drawn picture  
Of Christ, the living Word.
  
3. The Scripture is a banner  
Before God's host unfurled;  
It is a shining beacon  
Above the darkling world.  
It is the chart and compass  
That, all life's voyage through,  
'Mid mists and rocks and quicksands,  
Still guides, O Christ, to You.
  
4. Oh, make your church, dear Savior,  
A lamp of purest gold,  
To bear before the nations  
Your true light as of old.  
Oh, teach your wand'ring pilgrims  
By this their path to trace,  
Till, clouds and darkness ended,  
They see You face to face.

### The Message: ([Video Link](#))

This morning it is particularly fitting to recognize that we are in the midst of Nurses Week which began last Wednesday. During this health crisis our attention is especially drawn to those in the medical profession and those who staff our hospitals and nursing homes. I have discovered that those who often give the most in health care are nurses. It is the nursing care and compassion which brings relief and healing to those who are sick and dying. Anyone who has been hospitalized realizes their importance. The demands which they face daily are beyond

comprehension. I can readily attest to that. Besides the food, more importantly it is the nursing care upon which a patient makes their ultimate judgment of a hospital.

During a pandemic, like we are living today, we not only see the difficult task of nurses and the medical profession, but we also see the sacrifices which they are making. We see reports everyday of doctors, nurses, and medical personnel dying from the disease of which they are treating others. In addition, many are isolated from their own families or, because they must be with their family and children, are living in fear that they will somehow transmit the virus to their loved ones. It is not only the physical sacrifices which are being made but the emotional toil it is taking. It is the emotional toil which may ultimately be the biggest sacrifice being made. Although, often taken for granted, the people in the medical profession needs to take their rightful place in society as true heroes.

Today also is the appointed day to celebrate and be thankful for the life of our mothers. Although this year's celebration may not be as usual, nevertheless there still are meaningful ways to observe this special day. Perhaps this year, more than prior years, we can reflect upon the sacrifices mothers' make every day for their children. When in times of economic hardship, like many are experiencing today, it is the mother who sacrifices the most in order to provide for her children. Like nurses, we have depended upon their sacrifices to meet our physical and emotional needs as well as, in many cases, our spiritual needs. They too are often taken for granted and their sacrifices go without any gratitude in return.

With our mothers and many within the medical professions, the sacrifices they make are out of the motivation of love for another human being. Isn't this what the Easter message proclaims? It is the message of the sacrifice of the cross. Out of this sacrifice comes the message of love, God's love for all of us. In return we need to face any sacrifice when it is made out of the love for others. To live otherwise is to deny that which gives us true meaning in life. We live for self and only see others as tools to fulfill our selfish interests. We place ourselves on a pedestal so dangerously high that when in need of help no one can safely reach us. It is only out of sacrificial love of God and of others that we may be reached and perhaps saved.

God's message of love and forgiveness is the message of the empty tomb which gives us the hope that through love we have the promise of a new day and even a new life. Love is the key to life and how we meet the challenges of human hardship and crisis. John in his first letter wrote, "For this is the message you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another." We have been called to this life of love which takes us out the darkness of life's crisis into the light of a new day.

Peter added to what this means, " But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." It is this light which guides us through our darkest moments giving us the strength to let our love shine forth even when faced with death.

This becomes very evident with the life of Stephen. Stephen, a virtually unknown follower of Jesus, became the first martyr who faced death for his conviction in the message and life of Jesus. Upon his horrible and painful death by stoning, Stephen's last words still lived the

conviction of God's love. We are told, "While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice. 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this he died."

Today, the sacrificial love which is being made out of the love for others is not just an ancient story but very real. The day to day sacrifices which we have been asked to make out of our love for others just may keep those who are in harm's way safe in order to continue their lives of compassion and healing. Our sacrifice, exemplified by our mothers and those in today's medical professions, will bring about that hoped for light signifying the end of our time of trial and distress. This is a living message of God's love.

With this the words of the Psalmist take on new hope and meaning for life, "Into your hands I commend my spirit, for you have redeemed me, O Lord, God of truth. My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me. Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love."

**The Anthem:** ["Ava Maria"](#) Agne Giedraityte

**The Offering:\***

We give thee but thine own, what-e'er the gift may be; all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.

**The Prayer:**

Our most merciful God, on this special day we come to you with thanksgiving. We are extremely thankful for the love and sacrifice that our mothers have given us throughout the many years. They have been an example of love which we never forget. We also are thankful for the sacrificial love which nurses and the medical professionals have lived throughout this time of medical trauma which confronts us every day. We are not only thankful for these most important people in our lives but celebrate the love they extend to us and those in need. Continue to be with us as we live out these days of separation. Give us the wisdom to find ways to touch the lives who are suffering economic hardships. Let us always be mindful of the blessing you bestow upon us.

We especially seek healing and comfort for Pam Ash, Heidi Brackbill, Parker Brennan, Billy Jean Eddy & family, the Elshafei family, Betty Fultz, Darrell Garrison, the John Family, Robert

Karner, Ray Lambert, Donna Mayhew, Bev and Jim Mertz, Nic Nelson, Wendy Neumann, Elise Oliver, Peter Olsen, Dottie Reitz, Robert Reitz, Terre Rones, Paul Sagal, Colin Shea, Jerry Shea, Tommy Shimer, Jack Smith, the Spiegler family, Linda Stephens, Randy Stephens, Yongyin Sun, Esther and Buck Trautwein, Pastor Jack, and all those who are suffering pain, and sorrow as a result of this pandemic.

We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen

**The Lord's Prayer**

**The Benediction**

The Lord bless you and keep you;  
The Lord make His face shine upon you;  
The Lord lift up His presence upon you and give you peace. Amen

And now my brothers and sisters  
Live on knowing God's love,  
The joy of living this life of love,  
And the peace which only come through the power of His presence within you.  
So live on in Love, Joy, Peace, and Power.

**Closing Hymn:** ["Lord Speak To Me, That I May Speak"](#)

## *Happy Mother's Day*

\*Offering to be sent to:  
Bob Brackbill  
10274 Raleigh Tavern Road  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Epiphany Lutheran Church  
9122 Sybert Drive  
Columbia Hills  
Ellicott City, MD 21043  
Website: <http://www.epiphanylutherancolumbia.org/>