

In Memoriam
Darolyn Doggett Thomas
December 21, 1940 – May 31, 2010

Matthew 5.1-9

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

ἰδὼν δὲ τοὺς ὄχλους ἀνέβη εἰς τὸ ὄρος, καὶ καθίσαντος αὐτοῦ προσῆλθαν [αὐτῶ] οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ· 2 καὶ ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ ἐδίδασκεν αὐτοὺς λέγων·

3 Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι
ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

4 μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες,
ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται.

5 μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς,
ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν.

6 μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην,
ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται.

7 μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες,
ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται.

8 μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ,
ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται.

9 μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί,
ὅτι [αὐτοὶ] υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται.

+ *In nomine Domini. Amen.*

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.” These words of Jesus are nearly 2,000 years old. We are told that he spoke them to his followers as they were all gathered at the very northern edge of the Kinneret, the Sea of Galilee. It was a teaching, his teaching ... it was his way of living, it was his way to God.

We call these words the *Beatitudes*, from the Latin translation of the Bible which took the Greek word for Happy! ... and translated it as *Beatus* (Blessed).

I have my favourite Beatitudes ... they change it seems from day to day and occasion to occasion ... the one which has been spilling about in my head (and my heart) since Darolyn’s death on the 31st of May is: “Blessed are the pure in heart ...” Or as she would have expected me to say after giving her a brief lesson in New Testament Greek (she would even have me

write down the word, which I would do on any piece of paper lying about (μακάριοι) ...
“Happy are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”

I can think of no other phrase in all of Scripture when I think of her and what she has meant to our congregation and to me. From that moment when she walked into our worship and announced who she was and where she was from, helping me, of course, learn that her name was indeed *Darolyn* ... as she said, “Carolyn ... only with a D!” ... from that moment and the quickly ensuing appearances of her in my office volunteering to take over the business of arranging the Altar for worship ... and thus we have our well-organized *Sacristans* ... to the time of worrying about the purchasing and arranging of flowers for the Chancel ... and so we have our *Flower Arrangers* ... to the time when in the parking lot I noticed the Plate on the front of her car which read BEAD QUEEN ... and asked, “Are you?” ... and so we have our Prayer Bead Group (a photograph of her beads is on the front of your Bulletin this afternoon) ... to the moment of her deep desire to share Arts and Crafts and with it raise some much needed funds for the ministry of our congregation ... and so we have LutherFest each October ... which she has commandeered faithfully year after year, one year even from her hospital bed.

And somewhere, I have a photo of her standing in the parking lot as the Vendors and Visitors swarmed over our church grounds ... herself with something that resembled bumble-bee antennae attached to her head ... she said, “Well I wanted people to be able to find me if they needed something.”

Blessed/Happy are the pure in heart ...

A woman without guile ... with energy beyond her physical restraints in these last years ... with love overflowing from a heart pouring out for her family: Christi & Clay, David & Joanne, and Brian ... and most adorably so: Jessica & Matt, Loren, Lileigh and Sabrina; and her former husband Buzz ... Happy are the pure in heart.

We can see her still sitting in the back of the nave with her friends ... plotting, arranging, sharing, laughing, welcoming.

And crying ... the sharing of pain in a community of love ... that is what we are as the church ... supporting one another, building up one another, holding hands, lifting up when fallen ... she did that for us, and we shared all that with her as well ... for very few knew her medical past and present ... not a battle, I would not call it that, but a *living with* ... the example of which sustains many of us even now ... how she *lived* ... *with* ... what so many call burdens, impossibilities, trials and tribulations.

Happy are the pure in heart ...

I was quick to remind her whenever she went into the hospital that 90% of our members are almost always placed on the *Lutheran* side of the hospital ... the Eastern end ... which means that in most rooms and almost every time in her room a patient has line-of-sight access to our Church Building ... and as I reminded her, that means “We can see you too!”

Ah, the laughter ... the sharing ... the pure in heart.

There are so many stories ... we have been telling them to each other and I know there will be more and more this afternoon, this evening ... it is what we do as a community of faith ... we place our trust in the Holy One and tell the story ...

And woven in and out of that storytelling is a promise ... that the words of the one we follow are not false, but speak to us with truth and a depth of certainty ... as they were spoken that afternoon at the northern edge of the Lake we call the Galilee.

Blessed/Happy ... even in the midst of death, even in the midst of sadness and grieving ... not alone, not abandoned, not forgotten ... but wrapped up in the grace of God, enfolded in love and life, draped with the comfort of understanding and compassion ... and to that Promise, to that grace and love and life and understanding and compassion we tell to each other the story that Darolyn knows now with certainty ... death is not the final word of our existence ... and with shaken and broken hearts but with a joy inside ourselves that comes even in the darkest times, we commend our beloved sister Darolyn to the endless time of God.

Deo Gratias (+)
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