

Dear Leominster Church Family      Letter #10

Here I am once again writing to you in a place and time of year perfectly described by the words of Robert Frost, who with this lovely poem said...

*Nature's first green is gold, Her hardest hue to hold.  
Her early leaf's a flower; But only so an hour.  
Then leaf subsides to leaf. So Eden sank to grief,  
So dawn goes down to day. Nothing gold can stay.*

This bursting out of nature is indeed my favorite two weeks of the year. I think I appreciate it more than ever now, having been quarantined for these past few weeks. “*Any new happenings from Silver Lake St?*” I hear you asking. Well, I **can** announce, it’s finally official. Pam and I have settled on our number one favorite pandemic pastime. Are you ready? Drumroll please. Prepare to be shocked. Now that I have your attention (which is by the way the most important thing to do for any writer or speaker), I will tell you. It’s going for a drive. Now if anyone is saying, “*that’s not very novel,*” you would be wrong. What’s unique about our drives now is that for the first time in 44 years, we don’t have a destination. We don’t have to waste any time worrying about going here or going there. I don’t have to bring a map or use my GPS. I don’t worry about being late or making good time or taking a wrong turn. **Every** turn is a **right** turn. (that’s right as in correct) I don’t give a thought to getting lost, which under normal circumstances has always been one of the greatest abhorrence’s of my life. Now, I’m never on the wrong road, because, as they say, “*All roads lead to home.*”

One other delight we’ve been especially grateful for on our drives is that people who serve large ice cream cones are considered “essential workers.” Yes, life has its ups and downs. On the down side, I must say I am not a fan of the face covering, especially with the warmer weather. But, on the upside, I find it somewhat endearing when Pam demurely asks, “***Who IS that masked man?***” (Sorry my young friends, ask someone over 60)

It’s hard to believe that another Memorial Day weekend is upon us. Like the Sabbath which we remember each week, here is a day we set aside each year, calling to remembrance those who have given their lives in defense of our nation to

preserve the freedoms we are still blessed to have. And just like the Sabbath, which most of the world has forgotten, places like Peleliu, Guadalcanal, Anzio and Okinawa have little or no meaning to most in this world today. How sad that the sacrifices made in these places, the courage, the heroism shown there, are relatively unknown, except to a very few. The importance of remembering can never be understated. The value of cherishing memory can be lost sight of only at the risk of repeating the horrors of the past. Just ask anyone that is Jewish.

Consequently, we should not be surprised that on the wall above the eternal flame in the Hall of Remembrance of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC are graven these words, ***“Only guard yourself and guard your soul carefully, lest you forget the things your eyes saw and lest these things depart your heart all the days of your life. And you shall make them known to your children and to your children’s children” Deuteronomy 4:9.*** These words etched into granite, are certainly an apt admonition in consideration of what happened in places like Auschwitz and Buchenwald.

However the contextual setting of these words of Moses harkens back to the giving of God’s law. The original usage of this inspired counsel calls us to remember that a loving God gave to humanity a set of divine principles intended to guarantee our freedoms and happiness in this world and the next. Let’s not forget that the importance and immutability of the law given on Mt. Sinai can only be measured and validated by what happened on Mt. Calvary. There, by the shed blood of Jesus, the entire human race was emancipated. Let’s remember, on that faraway hill, greater love hath no man ever shown than when our Savior laid down His life for us, His friends.

So let’s follow the lead of the Psalm writer who says to us today....“Sing praise to the Lord...remember what the Holy One has done, and give him thanks!” Psalm 30:4

Your friends in Jesus, Pastor Mark and Pam

