

LENTEN MUSINGS 2008

I'd like to reflect a bit on the word covenant. In a covenant the emphasis is on relationship unlike a contract where the emphasis is specific actions. We make certain promises in the baptismal covenant which are the core of how we live and move and have our being in the world. Those promises mean we are to take action on them. We are to become what we claim to believe.

Remember a light that is hidden under a bushel can't shed light. I have said this before and it bears repeating over and over. You and I share equally in the ministry of the church and as a priest I can only do a few more things than lay people. Unless we each identify, claim, and share our gifts with one another, and in the world, the mission and ministry of the Church is blocked.

As Daughters of the King we are in a covenant relationship based on our vows of service, prayer, evangelism, and study. In some ways it's similar to what I tell field education students about preaching "if you don't believe it, you can't preach it". Likewise, if we do not take our vows and our baptismal promises seriously, calling forth one another's baptismal ministries, being supportive of each other along the way – what is the future of the church?

The journey is very often full of rocky, dangerous and uncomfortable places, with temptations that draw us from the path. I have a hunch that the only way our paths would be smooth and full of hearts and flowers would be if we were robots without emotions or the capacity to make choices. But, then, we would not be created in the image of God who came as Christ fully human and fully divine to experience and live as humans do. That is, without making mistakes, unlike us.

I have had many conversations recently with people regarding their feelings about the recent splits in the Episcopal Church. At a recent Mary's Hands and Martha's Heart Chapter meeting of the Daughters of the King at St. James, Sewanee, Sarah Sutherland shared a short devotion. It was based on the four Eucharistic verbs that really made an impact on me. The words are "take, bless, break, and give". My thought process translated those words as "take charge of, own, your feelings, bless them because they are a reality, break them or open them up, and give them to God to heal and/or deal with".

"Take, bless, break, and give", the four Eucharistic verbs are at the core of my Lenten discipline in 2008. I invite you to join me during this specific time to ask and reflect on the deep questions of "Where am I on the journey called faith? Am I too comfortable? What would God have me do? What do I need to take, bless, break, and give?"

May the presence of God, the righteousness of Christ, and the transforming Spirit be reflected in us, bringing only pleasure and glory to God through Jesus the Christ. Amen.

***For His Sake,
Linda+***

The Rev. Dr. Linda A. Hutton, Diocese of Tennessee Daughters of the King Chaplain

Editor's Note:

This newsletter was compiled during Lent, but delivery will not be until after Easter.

**"Alleluia, alleluia!
Hearts and voices
heavenward raise:
Sing to God a hymn of
gladness, sing to God
a hymn of praise.
He, who on the cross a
victim, for the world's
salvation bled,
Jesus Christ, the King
of glory, now is risen
from the dead."**

From hymn No 191,
The Hymnal 1982

*Christopher Wordsworth,
1807-1885*



Linda Hutton