

Dear Parishioners,

As strange as this must sound, I love a good thunderstorm. Thunderstorms have such a powerful build up: the day is usually hot, muggy and uncomfortable. The clouds begin to gather off to the west; they are grey, ominous, you can almost feel the first hints that all hell is going to break loose as the clouds darken the sunlight turning everything grey. There is, I think, nothing more frightening than grey.

We have weathered some powerful storms over the last few years. Our church has been buffeted about by an awful lot of bad news about things we cannot control. We have been rocked by scandal, heard the deafening roar of pain and shame over rampant sex abuse by those who have been called to shepherd the people of God. We have been pelted with a hailstorm of bad press, judgementalism and scorn. Through it all we wonder why God allows all this to happen, and we wonder how and when it will all stop.

Is Jesus asleep on a cushion there in the boat's stern? How can we survive all this turmoil without his help? Are we going to die? Will the boat be torn apart in the wind and the waves? How much more can the Church endure?

Every storm renders us powerless. There is no way to prevent a storm, and there is no way to lessen its impact, we have to take it as it comes knowing and trusting that, no matter what happens, God will take care of us - even if the storm's destruction is fatal. Our faith tells us there is always life on the other side of the storm: life that is renewed, life that is beautiful.

I love to watch the storm clouds in the east after the storm is over. The sun's light reflects off the towering white clouds still full of violent winds, drenching rain, and static electricity. As the sun continues to set, the bright white color fades to pink, then purple and even red. You can still see flashes of lightening far off in the now distant horizon of the storm while up above stars dance across the sky and all is well. It is in moments like this that we might be filled with awe as we remember the great truth that even the wind and the sea obey His commands and so must we.

All the turmoil in the church will pass, and return with future storms - and they are coming. Our place is here in the boat trying to get to the other side of the lake. Our God is not far away, and he will care for us. And when it is all over we will see that the best is yet to come.

In joyful hope,

Fr. Tim Seigel,
Pastor