

Reflection for Friday 3 April 2020

Ezekiel 34: 23-31

²³I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. ²⁴And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

²⁵I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish wild animals from the land, so that they may live in the wild and sleep in the woods securely. ²⁶I will make them and the region around my hill a blessing; and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing. ²⁷The trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase. They shall be secure on their soil; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke, and save them from the hands of those who enslaved them. ²⁸They shall no more be plunder for the nations, nor shall the animals of the land devour them; they shall live in safety, and no one shall make them afraid. ²⁹I will provide for them a splendid vegetation so that they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, and no longer suffer the insults of the nations. ³⁰They shall know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, says the Lord GOD. ³¹You are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture and I am your God, says the Lord GOD.

Today as I went on a run with my German shepherd dog, Fiona, I started to think about all the blessings I have in my life. The morning was a little chilly but certainly not cold and the sun was shining. Flowers and trees are starting to bloom, and the grass gets greener and longer with each passing day. As I waved to neighbors, I had a sense of peace. Yes, we are still mandated to stay home and the numbers of those affected with COVID-19 raises exponentially every day.

There are so many normal things in life that I can't do right now. Whether it is going out to dinner, gathering with friends, doing a little shopping, golfing or even being in church with all of you, none of that is permissible now. If we focus on what we can't do or what we don't have our mental health will certainly decrease. So, I am making a concerted effort to focus instead on my blessings.

I suspect that is an attitude we should always adopt but now seems even more necessary. When you focus on your blessings and start to list them you usually find more than you thought you had. And as we reflect more on our blessings, we have more opportunity to be thankful to God and to each other. I know it is cliché to say, *attitude of gratitude*, but doesn't that create more peace in our lives? Focus on the positive, on what you have, and you will have a more positive attitude. Give thanks for your blessings, both to God, and to people who make your life easier or better.

Be thankful in big things and in little things. I know that life is difficult right now and we will all have moments of fear, anxiety, doubt, and frustration. And we should acknowledge those feelings, share them with others and add them to our daily prayers. Let us remember too, that in the midst of all that is going on in the world, we are blessed.

Thanks be to God!

In Peace,

Pastor Suzanne

