

Reflection for Tuesday 26 May 2020

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

As we remembered Memorial Day yesterday, I took time to pray for those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for the freedoms that I experience every day. It is a day that hits awfully close to home as my late husband, Doug, served as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam. He was blessed to survive, come home, and have a family and a life. In 2007 he died as a direct result of agent orange. Not a day goes by that I do not think of him or what he did with his life. When he returned home, he continued to serve in the Army National Guard and flew Medevac for the Lehigh Valley Health Network. He was a true hero.

Unfortunately, he is just one of many that lost their lives in the field of battle or later at home because of their time in service to our country. They deserve our enduring thanks and their loved ones deserve our enduring support. It never ceases to amaze me that men and women are still willing to put their lives on the line for their fellow human beings. Our country is not perfect, but it is a darn good place to live. Our lives are not perfect, but we are truly blessed. We have more than most people in the world, even and especially amid this pandemic.

And it is not own doing but God's gift to us. There are so many people that need our prayers right now. Those who are sick and those who care for them. Those who are researching cures and vaccines. Those who are in essential businesses that provide food, basics of life, internet, and power. Far too many to name. Those who are trying to help the families that are in need because of lost jobs and income. Those small business owners who are struggling to keep people employed and continue to provide services. Those who work in the travel and leisure industry. Those who continue to serve in our military and our first responders. The list is long and gets longer every day.

It can become overwhelming to think about the ways that our daily life is changing. It can lead to feelings of helplessness and even hopelessness. There is so much we can not control at this time. But there is one especially important thing we can and should control and that is our response to what is happening around us. While researching for my sermon last week I came across an app that you can download on your phone or tablet called Echo Prayer. The basic app is free although you can upgrade for more possibilities for a small fee. The basic app allows you to set a time for prayer and even people or things to include in your prayer and the app will remind you to pray.

I have been using it for almost a week and I find it extremely helpful. It reminds me to slow down and take a moment or two or three to pray. The give thanks to God and to ask for God's help and comfort. Prayer is quite easy; it is just talking with God and when the app reminds you it keeps your prayer time consistent and genuine. I pray each day for you, and I ask your prayers for me and all those in our community of faith. It is such a powerful way to deepen your relationship with God and with each other. I recommend that Echo prayer app to each of you and wish you a blessed and peaceful day.

In Peace,

Pastor Suzanne