



Reflection from Deacon Ross 7/12/2020

Bulletin Column

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A Midsummer Night's Dream

No, not the dream of Shakespeare's lovers. Our Midsummer Night's Dream is the dream of poor mortals entrapped in a seemingly never-ending story of sickness, inaction, irresponsible decisions, senseless disregard and a host of other problems in every corner of our nation.

Not to paint too bleak a picture... but the *Summer of Covid* is turning out to be a nightmare for millions of people. And we individuals feel helpless to do anything more than try to protect our own health and that of our family. All the time facing more restricted interaction with people. And the personal and economic fallout is mind-numbing. Add to that the ongoing social issues of justice and racial inequality seething in our country – long before Covid came on the scene, and you have a Midsummer Night's really Bad Dream.

How do we deal with these realities when they seem to be so entrenched and persistent? Nothing we do seems to have a real impact on the overall problems. Frustration and anger easily take over.

In this Sunday's letter of St. Paul to the Romans (8:18-23), we read, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed in us." That sounds removed from the harshness of today's injustice and inequality and Covid sickness and death. But Paul goes on, "For creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but because of the one who subjected it..." In other words, creation is in such a condition as we have today not on its own account, but because of the entrance of sin. Centuries of sin. Human beings have not learned how to live together in harmony and to share their advances freely.

St. Paul says "We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now...." No doubt. Yes, creation is in labor and the birth of equality and responsible living is nowhere near delivery. And that pains us greatly. The whole condition of society pains us.

We can and must do what we are able in these pandemic and racially charged times. We are not detached bystanders. Our discomfort and frustrations won't make it easy for us to be engaged. We must, though. St. Paul gives us encouragement, "The Spirit too helps us in our weakness...." We are not in this alone. Centuries of human weakness and inaction won't be turned around in a summer or a century, but relying on the promised action of God, we can do our part and others will join us. "Is it possible that he who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for the sake of us all will not grant us all things besides?" (Rom. 8:32)

God is in it for the long-haul. We are, too... in our allotted span here on earth.