



Pastor Scot's First of the Month Letter February 2025

In these first few days of the new federal administration, I have several personal thoughts. But I am among you as your resident theologian, not a political commentator. Though, to be clear, it is impossible to speak of theology and not be political, because

both are concerned with the welfare of people. For today let me just say I concur with Episcopal Bishop Mariann Budde and her Jan 21 sermon asking the president "to have mercy on the people of our country."

Now let me move on to my originally planned topic...FAITH.

"The opposite of faith is not doubt, but certainty."

A few weeks ago, I watched the movie "Conclave." The premise of the movie is that the pope has died and the College of Cardinals is gathering in conclave to elect a new pope. As they are about to begin their sequestered process, Ralph Fiennes, who plays the camerlengo, gives a brief homily. Here are excerpts...

"Dear Brothers in Christ, at the moment of great uncertainty, ...we must pray to God for loving assistance, and ask Him to guide us to the right choice. But you know all that. Let me speak from the heart for a moment. St. Paul said, 'Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.' To work together, and to grow together, we must be tolerant. No one person or faction seeking to dominate another.

And speaking to the Ephesians, who were of course a mixture of Jews and gentiles, Paul reminds us that God's gift to the church... is its variety. This variety, this diversity of people and views which gives our church its strength. And over the course of many years in the service of our Church, let me tell you, there is one sin, which I have come to fear above all others:

Certainty.

Certainty is the great enemy of unity. Certainty is the deadly enemy of tolerance.

Even Christ was not certain at the end. My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? Our faith is a living thing, precisely because it walks hand-in-hand with doubt.

If there was only certainty...and no doubt...there would be no

mystery...and therefore no need... for faith.”

Last month I wrote to you about the difference between decision making and discernment. This conversation continues as I talk about faith and doubt and certainty. As this congregation and its dedicated Call Committee continue the diligent work of self-study to prepare for the next settled pastor, it is a discernment process that is all about faith, and not certainty.

I encourage you to continue to pray for your Call Committee. Continue to pray for the person God is selecting to be the next pastor for Our Savior's Lutheran Church. Continue to walk in faith and hope, and even a little doubt through this time for congregation and for our country.

I look forward to seeing you in worship,
Pastor Scot



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