

29 March 2021  
Holy Monday

Saint Athanasius Lutheran Church  
Vienna, VA

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Holy Monday Meditation  
Text: Hebrews 9:11-15

***Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come.***

Good things. Those are not only the things to come. That's what creation was in the beginning. Each day, God created. And each day, God saw that it was good. And at the end of the six days, it was all *very* good. Perfect. And in perfect harmony. All parts of creation working flawlessly and seamlessly with each other. Nothing too late. Nothing too early. Nothing *off*, even a little. Everything right. And good.

Until it wasn't. Until Adam and Eve decided that good wasn't good enough. But after their redesign of God's creation, things weren't better than good. Now nothing was good. Their relationship with God, their relationship with each other, their relationship with the world. They themselves and all creation, now no longer good. Now, infected by sin. And now with sin, things would die. *They* would die. And a world in which before there was no death, would now struggle to live.

You can imagine the sadness and sorrow of our first parents. How they ruined everything. A sadness and sorrow that would grow as their struggles continued year after year, as they lived through the murder of their son. Actually, you don't have to imagine it - you know it. The deeds done, the words spoken, that you wish you could take back, that ruined everything. The death you live through. The sorrows and sadness of life. You know them well.

So what good news for us tonight, to hear that ***Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come . . .*** again! The old high priests helped the people muddle through, God giving them hope through the blood of goat and calves, bulls and heifers, that a better day was coming. We hope for lots of things today, that sometimes come and sometimes don't. But hope in the words and promises of God is *never* left unfulfilled.

And so as we heard, not an old high priest, but a new one has come. Not for the ***purification of the flesh***, but to ***purify our consciences***. Not for redemption until the next sin, but for ***an eternal redemption*** - a once and for all redemption. And so not with the blood of goats or calves, bulls or heifers, but with His own blood, with His own holy, divine, sinless blood, ***the blood of Christ***, the blood of God, was ***a new covenant***, a new testament, sealed. ***So that those who are called*** (that's you!) ***may receive the promised eternal inheritance***. For you have a Redeemer, and you have been redeemed, by His

blood.

So now there are good things again! You are good again in the forgiveness of your sins. By the blood of Christ in the water of baptism, the blood of Christ soaking every page and word of Scripture, the blood of Christ speaking in every Absolution, the blood of Christ poured into your mouths, purifying you and promising you an eternal inheritance. An inheritance that is really a restoration. Back to when everything was good. When it will all be good again.

That good is already here for you *now*, just *not yet* in all its fullness. You have forgiveness *now*, you are cleansed *now*, Christ is working in you *now*, to live a new life, a good life *now*. To give you hope in your sorrows and joy in your sadness. To speak words that heal, not hurt. To do deeds that help, not ruin. That good again you bring good into a not-good world.

And just as you know the not-goodness of the world, so too you know this goodness. You've seen the difference a good word, a good deed can do. And above all, the good words and deeds we hear again this week - the good of Christ for you.

So rejoice this holy week. Do not mourn the death of Christ, but rejoice that He did this, He willingly laid down His life in love for you. And that, just as in the beginning, *God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good* (Genesis 1:31). Again.

In the Name of the Father, and of the (+) Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.