

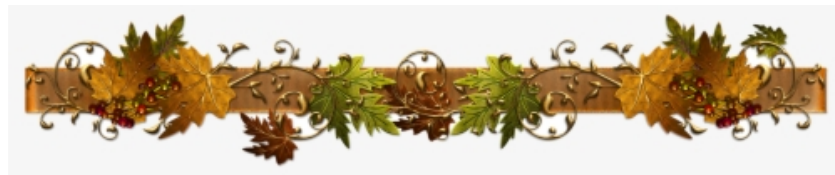
Devotions – November 8-14, 2020
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Sunday, November 8, 2020

The church is like a flock of geese. Yes, you heard right. Walking through the cemetery and Mattson Park (in Marquette) for nine months you can't help but notice the geese. Did you know that geese mate for life? That certainly speaks to their commitment. After the young hatch, you will see mom and dad (goose and gander) standing guard on either side of the flock, keeping the family safe. As the months go by you will find the young being taught where and what to eat and eventually how to fly, and then as fall begins how to fly in formation and finally how to change places in the formation to give the leader rest.

We are the church, drawn together by our belief in the love of God and saving grace. We are committed to God and to each other. We teach our young about the Triune God, about God's love for creation and saving grace, about Jesus' sacrifice and atonement for our sins and about the Spirit's continuing encouragement and guidance. We are called to love one another, guard and protect each one. We pray together and look for ways to enlarge the flock.

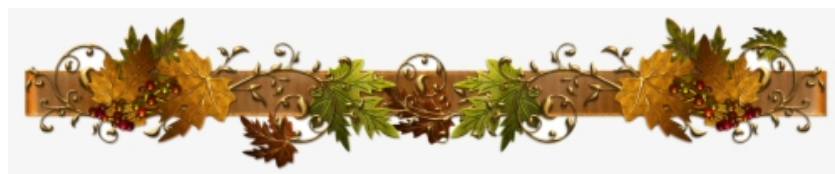
So today we pray that we might be like geese. We pray that God will strengthen the church, us, in mission.



Monday, November 9, 2020

Homeless and cold; where are you God? So hungry that the bones show through my emaciated body, my insides ache. Where is God? Sick and miserable, pain filled and hurting so that one can't even stand. Where, oh where, are you, God?

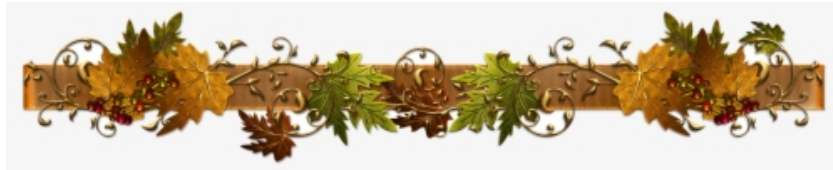
God is here, God is everywhere, and God acts. God acts through us. Jesus tells us that as often as we clothe the naked, feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, we do so also for him. We pray, Lord, that you will lead us and move us to do this.



Tuesday, November 10, 2020

Focus! As we look through the camera lens, we have to turn the focus ring to see our subject. Maybe we have to go to the eye doctor to get gasses or have cataracts removed so we can see.

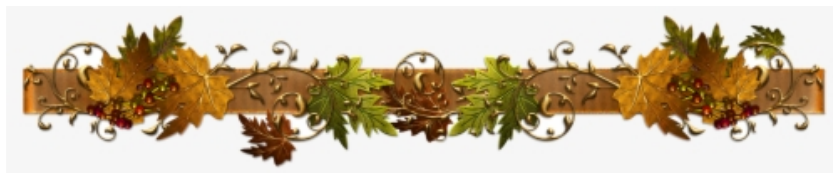
We pray, Lord, help us to see clearly; to focus our lives on you. Help us to prioritize our lives, making you first.



Wednesday, November 11, 2020

Today we celebrate the cessation of hostility and the end to all war. At least that was the thought over a century ago. We have seen so many conflicts since that time. We have experienced so many deaths, maiming, injuries and scarring - both physical and mental. And still we pray as the psalmist. Behold the one who makes war to cease in all the world; who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the shield with fire. (Psalm 46)

Dear Lord, gives us leaders who seek justice for all with compassion. Remove hatred and greed. God, grant us peace.

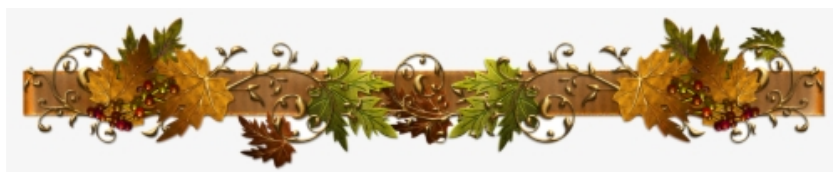


Thursday, November 12, 2020

The numbers keep climbing: more people positive for the Coronavirus. Hospitalizations are increasing and the death rate is rising. Yet, Jesus' words ring in our ears, "Be not afraid."

How do we act through all of this? Being careful and being prepared is not being afraid. We are also called to care for God's creation, which includes ourselves as well as others. We are asked to protect others by simply wearing a mask and ourselves by social distancing and not gathering in groups. Do not engage in risky behavior. We look for ways to combat this disease.

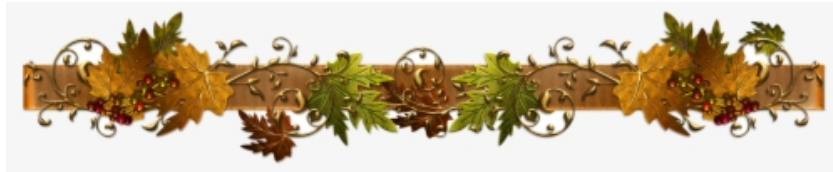
We also need to prepare our soul, cleanse our hearts from evil and pray. This is what you are to do today and every day: pray. It doesn't matter where you are or what you are doing as God is right there with you; just pray. Yet, if all your preparations fail remember the words, "Be not afraid." We are told that there is a place for us. Take comfort in this.



Friday, November 13, 2020

Not long ago we had the opportunity to awaken to a world covered in new fallen snow. The moonlight reflecting from it made it look as though the earth was covered in diamonds. It was white and pure. It was as though God was covering up all the old and creating anew. Oh, I know that as the snow accumulates, we will look differently at the mounds of snow that we have to move, but just this once enjoy the feeling of cleansing and new creation.

God make us like new snow, forgive us for the wrong we have done. Clean our minds and hearts from all wrongful thoughts and desires. God, remake us in your image; make us new again.



Saturday, November 14, 2020

Time, what is it? Where does it go? We hear of the possibility of traveling faster than the speed of light. Will that take us back or forward in time?

As we approach the Christmas season, we will again see Scrooge being able to see his past life and future death and being given the opportunity to change. We, too, are given the opportunity to reflect on our past, what we have done and what we have failed to do. What we are not given is the chance to see the future, but we are given the ability to change our lives. This is where faith comes in.

In time our earthly lives end. What will people think of us then but more importantly what happens next? Will there be an afterlife? We have faith that there is but what will it be like? Remember the ability of reflection? We ask for forgiveness of those things that we have done and those things we have left undone that harm others and separate us from God. We pray that God changes us, making us better people of God. We pray for God's kingdom to come and for the life everlasting. Take the time to reflect and pray.

