

Genesis 15:1-6

Psalms 33:12-22

Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

Luke 12:32-40

On Wednesday, an Emirates plane crash-landed at Dubai International Airport. It caught fire quickly and Flight Attendants evacuated the plane as quickly as they could. But something held up that process of emergency evacuation. Later that morning a video was uploaded showing the evacuation. It's pretty chaotic and scary as people are leaving the plane around oxygen bags that have dropped down. In the background you can hear the flight attendant shouting "Jump and Slide, Leave your Bags behind!" A life and death situation and the first instinct is to grab their bags. Aviation expert says this pattern is beginning to emerge now in emergency landings. Those precious seconds could mean the difference between survival and death.

Jesus said, Do not be afraid little flock. Sell your possessions, make unfailing treasures in heaven, for where your treasure is, your heart is also. It's a familiar phrase. What do we treasure? Surely this shows in our lives by how we prioritize them and by the products and services we purchase. But it also shows itself in those, God forbid, emergency situations when we

see what we grab. Almost the question of: if your house was on fire, what would you take with you?

Of course, where we live, most of us don't live in mortally dangerous situations. It's why Jesus begins with inviting the disciples and us to live without fear in any situation as we each encounter fear in our own ways throughout the day. It's a natural progression then when Jesus moves into preparation and expectation in welcoming God's presence among us. Because the preparation that we do in collecting our treasures, in curating our daily lives both material and spiritual, helps us harness that energy and the spirit for what we do for the kingdom of God.

We have a lot of treasure here at St. Andrew's. Our sanctuary is a gem- one of the most gorgeous sanctuaries I've been able to worship in. But our true gem is the community that gathers day in and day out, not just on Sundays. Our treasures are our values and mission of what we're called to: to offer Sanctuary in the City, Grow in God's Love and Seek the Renewal of the world. The Gospel is difficult to proclaim but with Jesus already forging the path, we can live with even just a little less fear in living out these values inside but most importantly outside our church plant.

Our season of sabbatical has one month remaining. Jesus invites us, especially in this reading, to be alert to what is around us. Being dressed

for action isn't about being hyper-vigilant but rather being present and noticing each aspect of our lives. God coming into our lives is not about being afraid that we aren't living into some sort of expectation; but being secure in knowing that God loves each of us and simply wants to be with us. In this sabbatical season, in finding rest, renewal, re-creation, where have you found God delighting in you? What have you found that brings you joy that you might need more of, and what have you found that sucks your energy, makes you more tired? It's not too late to engage in this discipline.

Because, here's the twist, as there always is one. Two times Jesus mentions the purpose of this spiritual discipline. It's not just to streamline and purge and push against overconsumption. But rather: It's God's good pleasure to give us this abundance and joy. And, when we become aware and are prepared and ready to receive, God is already there for us. The master, when he returns from the wedding banquet, doesn't expect to be served by the servants who have been preparing to do so. The master has them sit down and serves them. Well done, good and faithful servant. You have fought the good fight, finished the race, and remained faithful. It's not what we expect and it can be uncomfortable- are we worthy enough to receive this good gift?

So we push back on noticing. We push back on rest. Because when we notice, God shows us some hard truths to swallow. Some truths in self-examination are much needed to help us become better Christians and better humans. And some truths that show us how we are enough and how we are worthy in God's eyes just as God created us.

They don't know why people try to grab their bags on an airplane when disembarking in an emergency. Br. Curtis reminds us in the daily email from the Society of St John, "We're not owners of anything, but simply temporary stewards in life entrusted with "goods"- and in the meantime, we take what we've been entrusted and offer it back to God." What baggage in your life do you need to leave behind (get into proper perspective) to be in fuller relationship with God?