

Third Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Text: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
Date Preached: January 24, 2010

Grace to you and peace from God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. AMEN.

Daisy was a wonderful energetic willing to do anything for anybody always on the go type of person. Daisy was always active in the church and very visible in the community.

One day Daisy's life changed when she suffered a stroke. This once vibrant woman was now extremely limited in her mobility and in her speech wondering how much if any part of her body affected by the stroke will function again. Simple things once done with ease have become nearly impossible. One half of her body works well; the other half is simply present.

I'm sure many of us know a Daisy in our life. As Daisy grieves her lack of ability, those around her grieve as well. As Daisy relearns through therapy how to harmonize the functioning part of her body with the rest of her body, so too her family, her church and others need to relearn and redistribute the work they always counted on Daisy to do.

“The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you, not again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” Any body or group needs to cooperate well together in order to function to the best of its ability. It is true in families. It is true on the job. It is true in the church, the body of Christ.

We say in our liturgy of Holy Baptism that “...by water and the Holy Spirit we are reborn children of God and made members of the Church, the body of Christ. Living with Christ and in the communion of saints, we grow in faith, love and obedience to the will of God.”

When we take the attitude of not participating in the life of the church two people are hurt. The first person hurt is ourselves. Can we pray by ourselves? Sure. Can we sing to God by ourselves? Yes. But where we struggle is in our own growth as a child of God.

To look at things another way it would be like trying to feed ourselves without the need of farmers, or the butcher, or the truck drivers that take the manufactured and fresh foods to the stores or the clerks that stock the shelves. Can it be done? Probably; yet it would likely be done at the expense

of others contributions we wish to make with our time, energy, and talent.

Likewise, as a church no matter how large we simply cannot write people off and treat them as if they are not important or that their ideas and contribution is not welcome.

Within this body of Christ we call the church we rely on the widest understanding of the word church. There is much we can do as a congregation, and we have a history to doing great ministry in this area.

Yet by ourselves we cannot train our future pastors. We rely on the wisdom of members from the whole Christian Church to write materials for Christian education, and the wide array of programs in areas of Evangelism, Stewardship, Social Ministry, men's and women's groups, etc. We cannot by ourselves respond to the needs of fellow members of the body of Christ currently suffering in Haiti.

Yet in the one body of Christ across this country and across the globe, God has brought us together. God has said to this creation that is broken in every conceivable way, that I love you.

God the giver of life has joined us to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, binding us together as one body. It is a body that God nourishes with his Word.

This Word of God proclaims forgiveness to the body when it has gone its own way or has become incapacitated with internal strife. The Word of God comforts this body in her grief. The Word of God gives hope in the midst of despair and life in the face of death.

God further feeds the body of Christ with the body and blood of his only begotten Son. In the Sacrament of Holy Communion the body of Christ and each individual member hears again the total commitment God has we who are the pinnacle of creation.

Fed in Word and Sacrament we are then equipped and sent out into a hurting world to be present in the needs of our neighbors near and far. Before we even take one step in our ministry as the body of Christ we are greeted with a surprise. The surprise is that God is ready to meet us in the work he has called and given us to do.