

Pastor Geoffrey R. Boyle  
Funeral for Lorine Thrash  
12 March 2012  
Grace Lutheran Church, Wichita  
Revelation 21:3-4

*In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit*

St. John tells the truth.  
It's not a lie.

What we heard in the reading from Revelation today,  
about God dwelling with man and being with His people,  
about tears being wiped away once and for all,  
and death being no more,  
neither mourning, crying, nor pain—  
it's all true!

And that's where Lorine rests.

But this place isn't up in the clouds, or in a fairy tale,  
or a nice story we try to comfort ourselves with.

The vision St. John saw is true—  
there is a place where sin can't be found,  
where tears do not flow,  
and where death is unheard of—  
and it's a *real* place.

And yet this real place, the truth of God dwelling with man, is *hidden* from our eyes.  
We don't *see* it;  
and in fact, what makes this so incredible, is that everything in life suggests the opposite.

In what we call *real life* there's no shortage of pain and sorrow.  
Death comes frequently, and unfortunately it's not always partial to age—  
we live in a world where even the young die.

Death isn't good.  
It's not nice.  
It's not the way our Lord intended things to be—  
even for Lorine, who,  
thanks be to God died with little suffering and after a very long and blessed life.  
Even still, death isn't good.  
There were no funerals in Eden!

And so when we hear about a place where “death shall be no more”—  
we hope it's true!  
but we can't help wondering if it's just a nice fairy tale we tell ourselves—  
not *real*.

Well, it is real,  
 and more than that,  
 it exists even today, even here, even in the midst of death itself!

Where? You ask.  
 St. John in this vision tells us that this place is wherever God Himself dwells with man.

Wherever you can find *that* place, the dwelling place of God, *there* you have life,  
 and you have it abundantly and eternally.

So where is God?  
 Where does God dwell with man?  
 And better yet, Where is God with all these promises of life and joy *for me*?

I'll give you a clue:  
 If you've ever been to Sunday school as a kid, or heard a children's sermon,  
 you'll know that the answer is always *Jesus!*

And it's right.

In Jesus, St. Paul says, "the fullness of God dwells bodily" (Col 2:9).

In Christ, there is forgiveness of sin.  
 In Christ, there's life and salvation.  
 In Christ, God Himself dwells for you—  
 to love you and care for you and give His life *for you*.

In Christ, God dwells with man on earth.

And so wherever Jesus *really* is,  
 there you'll find that place where sin and sorrow and sickness and suffering are no more.

Wherever Jesus is,  
 the Jesus who came down from heaven above,  
 who suffered the rejection and mocking and scorn of His people,  
 who carried His cross and was crucified, died, and buried,  
 and who on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day rose again—  
 wherever *that* Jesus is,  
 there you'll find Lorine.

For she's with Christ—  
 just like she's always been, ever since the waters of Holy Baptism washed her clean in  
 the blood of the lamb,  
 and she was made His own dear child.

And the same goes for you, too.

The only difference between you Christians, who gather around this Jesus today—  
whether it's gathering around His word of sins forgiven,  
or around the Holy Sacrament of His body and blood for you—  
the only difference between you and Lorine,  
is that the reality of this place of life and joy is hidden for you,  
but finally revealed for her.

Now she actually sees it and lives it without any hindrance.  
No more believing, no more hoping, just seeing for her.

But for us, for all of us still struggling through our pilgrimage in a world full of death and sorrow,  
we have this hope, this trust, that as long as we are with Jesus,  
gathered around His word and around His sacraments,  
we share in this reality to.

And even though it's a hidden reality for us,  
thank God we can experience it's joys little by little along the way.

Thank God for saints like Lorine,  
who teach us to trust in this Christ,  
who show us what a life of faith looks like for us to follow,  
and who bring joy to our lives, just by being among us.

She will be missed—  
but she's not gone.

Lorine is with Jesus,  
and so are you.

*In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit*