

Reflections on Faith and Life for Lent 1, February 21, 2021

“God is good!” “All the time.” “All the time,” “God is good!” This is a call-and-response used in the Via de Cristo (lay-led spiritual renewal movement) and in many congregations. It’s a good reminder of our God’s faithfulness! So is Romans 8:28, “**All things work together for good with those who love God and are called according to his purpose.**” That doesn’t mean God will prevent “bad” things from happening, but that he’ll incorporate *all* things, good and bad and otherwise, into his plan *for good* for each of us who love and follow him.

We at St. John are *living* proof of that. Three weeks running with no heat: providing a new thermostat after week 1; providing another new thermostat after week 2; and filling our empty fuel tank after week 3. (Thanks to the 15 of you who endured the 52 degree worship on February 7th!) When all the obvious issues had been taken care of, the furnace still refused to work. Our Superhero Steve Robers discovered why: the chimney, from the basement to the roof, was chock-full of ashes dead birds, birds nests, and crumbling brick (35 buckets at least!). If anyone had fallen asleep in the nave (where we worship) and stayed for about 8 hours, you probably would have awakened in the arms of Jesus due to carbon monoxide poisoning! I don’t know how many hours Steve spent here the week before last, but it was well over 20, and it included a very brief lift ride to the roof in near-zero temperatures. We can’t hug Steve, or pat him on the back right now, but give him an air-hug or high five and a heartfelt thank you!

I received from a college roommate (a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away) the Doxology (song of praise) as sung by Minnesotans. It’s particularly apt right now as temperatures both high and low have been in the single digits—except when the low temps were something like -24.

*Praise God from whom all blizzards flow!
Praise him at thirty-five below!
Praise him in snowdrifts ten feet deep!
Parise him though winter makes us weep!*

Blessings to all as we make our way towards the cross on this Lenten journey!