

**March 28, 2010**

**The Very Reverend Dr. Philip C. Linder+**

“Lord, take my lips and speak through them; take my mind and think through it; take my heart and set it on fire for your Holy Gospel.” +Amen.

This past week I received a call that my new prescription glasses were ready and I enthusiastically went off during my lunch hour to pick them up. They are one of the latest in progressive lenses, called “digital advanced view progressives.” Now it has been more than two years since I updated my eyeglass prescription and no, my eyes are not as good as they were in 2007. So I was very ready to now see more clearly.

An amazing, and at times troubling phenomenon of life in the twenty-first century is that everything, especially our means of communicating and being with one another have sped up to an almost incalculable pace. Imagine now Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey and how slow the pace of that event must have been. Those of you that have ridden a horse in a slow walk

know what it feels like to move at that pace, and especially how on the back of a walking horse you are able to notice more.

Jesus could look into the eyes of those who lined that dry dusty Jerusalem road waving palm branches to welcome Him as the one coming in the Name of the Lord. Episcopal priest and author, Barbara Brown Taylor, writes in her latest book, An Altar in the World, *If Jesus had driven a car instead, it is difficult to imagine how that might have changed his impact. Surely someone could have loaned him a fast horse. Instead, he walked everywhere he went, except for a short stint on a donkey at the end. This gave him time to see things, like the milky eyes of the beggar sitting by the side of the road, or the round black eyes of sparrows sitting in their cages at the market. (p.65)*

As I left the Lenscrafters' store with my new eyeglasses on my eyesight was a bit blurry, especially if I looked off to the sides. I decided that I probably should not yet wear them driving, and on my way back to Trinity began pondering how fast the pace of life is today that it too in effect often gives us a blurry image of what it means to be Christian, and what our priorities in this life should be.

The Sunday afternoons portrayed on the Andy Griffin Show, with Andy, Barney, and Aunt Bee rocking on the porch after Church service and contemplating their ice cream desert, has been replaced with sporting activities, shopping, texting, and cell phones. There was clarity in those Sunday afternoons of a bygone era that has been lost.

Yet the slow and steady drama of the Passion Gospel and the unfolding story during Holy Week of Jesus' days leading to crucifixion have the capacity to focus our eyes and hearts anew upon our Christian lives and priorities. In much the same way as Jesus focused upon each individual whom he came upon, we today can focus upon Christ, what he did for each of us personally, and how we as Christians can serve him and the kingdom of God.

Jesus whom they crucified does not want just a little of you, he wants all of you. And Jesus wants your priorities to be those that he taught, lived, and for which he died. What got Jesus crucified was that he upset the secular culture's status quo. And perhaps more than anything else, he threatened a way of life that was both comfortable and sinful to those with wealth and in power—one

where the Temple's High Priests and the Roman Rulers supported one another to the detriment of everyone else.

As Holy Week has now begun may it be a time where you slow down the pace, attend the liturgies on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, and look with clear vision at what part of your life you are giving to Jesus Christ—is it some or all of your life? Are you living the values for which Jesus lived and was crucified?

**+AMEN.**