

Second Hand Preacher

2nd Sunday of Lent

February 21, 2016

Philippians 3:17-4:1

“Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ”

The above quote from our second reading is a favorite of mine. The passage is an option in the Funeral Liturgy book for burials. It is read between the opening message and the prayer of committal. There are times I preach after the scripture and I find it very rich. In my rural area, there are a fair number of people who are excellent citizens. They volunteer for community events and many of them served in the military. So they know service and citizenship in this life. The shift in this passage is that now we need to focus on our citizenship in the life to come. Our loyalty needs to be with the Lord. We need to choose Jesus with our lives, if we hope for everlasting life. The same energy that we put into our civil affairs should be reflected in our faith as well.

St. Paul knew this. He knew that there were Roman citizens among the Christian community in Philippi. He was so grateful for the way this community treated him in this life that he wanted them to be with him in a life to come. As believers, they needed to choose their true loyalty. They have to exist in the world, but have a priority of the world to come.

This is so true for us. On Tuesday, March 1st, is the caucus throughout the state of Minnesota. It is recommended for people to be a part of the political process. Hopefully our lives of faith should inform how we vote civilly. We can't just check our faith at the door and go about our lives without Jesus calling us back. We have religious freedom so that we can practice our faith and that it can be lived out in the public arena. I, as a member, will never support one candidate over another from the pulpit. I will, however, bring up issues that are important to the basic tenants to our faith. As citizens of both the world and of heaven, we have to choose. The church provides council and wants her people to act in the world with well-formed consciences.