

November 6, 2022

All Saints' Day | The Veil is Thin

Recorded: The Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Detroit

Visiting: All Saints', East Lansing

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May the God who creates us...

Good Morning!

The veil is thin for me this time of year: on All Hallows' Eve, All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. The veil is thin as I remember everyone I've loved who has gone before me. I think of Terrence Patrick McHugh, Terry, I sat next to him as he took his last breaths: breathing in and out and then not again. It was the first time I had ever been with someone as they died. The veil is thin this time of year. I imagine some of you might feel similarly.

On this day, in this place, we stand at a crossroads. A crossroads of time and space and people and faith. It is if you will a multivalent intersection. Remembering those who have died and celebrating those who are alive and about to embark on a whole new part of their life. In this crossroads we remember the holes in our souls, the price we pay for love and we simultaneously prepare to open our hearts to new loves, new life. The veil is thin today, between heaven and earth.

I was able to spend a bit of time earlier in the week talking with All Saints' parishioner, Janet Chegidden. As many of you know her husband Dan died in January. They were married for 46 years. Janet said, "I was 22 when we got married, its been a long time since I've been

alone.” Their first date was at steak joint in Topeka Kansas. Janet said, “I was just getting by on my teacher’s salary and at that point I would have dated King Kong for a steak.” But something clicked on that first date and they wound up getting married 8 months later.

And now almost half a century later, with two children, four grandchildren. “Dan had such a big personality, he filled most rooms, I think the oldest grandchildren will remember him, but not the younger.”

The Veil is thin.

We stand at the intersection of those who have gone before us and today, the ones who come after. This morning we are confirming and receiving: Matthew Boughton, Susan Brown and Emily Waller and baptizing four younger ones: Heath, George, Thomas and Nora. Nora, as many of you will know is parishioner Mike Lashbrook’s granddaughter. Mike a longtime finance committee person, who died about a year ago and now we who have been touched by Mike’s care and love, will make promises to his granddaughter to be those people for Nora and for Thomas, Heath and George and Matthew, Susan and Emily. We here can be the ones, to shape and form and transform their lives and be changed ourselves in the process, for the veil is thin.

It is a sad day, a joyous day, a paradoxical moment in time.

A time when we feel the searing price of loss and love and the expanding hope of a future not yet authored.

On this blessed Holy day, let us remember that God has promised from the beginning to time to be with us always and God’s promise and God’s

presence does not end when we die, for as we share in Christ's baptism, so shall we share in his eternal life.

This is the day, the blessed, broken, beautiful day.

As I was ending my conversation with Janet said to me, that she feels Dan's presence, the presence of her sister who also died this year. She said she feels the light touch of their hands cupping her face, as she kneels after receiving communion. I just know then that they are with me. She said, I think at that moment, the veil is thin between heaven and earth.

And it is. Thanks be to God.

Amen.