

Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him. (Matthew 25:6b)

The end of the Church Year reminds us that the sanctity of human life does not end at the time of death, but extends into eternity. From the time that He brings us into existence in our mothers' fallopian tubes, God is intimately involved in our physical well-being (see, for example, Dr. Luther's Small Catechism on the First Article of the Creed and the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer). Not only that, but, having sent His only begotten Son to die on the Cross and rise again, God desires us and all people to be saved and to live eternally in His presence. To that end, He calls and gathers us at least weekly to receive His gifts in His Word and Sacrament, sustaining in us in His faith, that oil of salvation through which we are redeemed, forgiven, healed, and set apart as His people. As we continue to receive these gifts, we know that when the time comes for us to fall asleep in Him, we can die unfearing, confident in our certain hope that on the Last Day He will raise us again, our bodies perfected and reunited with our souls and our lamps burning brightly, as we meet our Lord to enter with Him into His eternal wedding feast.

Having thus been gifted by God with everything that we could possibly need, we are free to selflessly serve our neighbors, both friend and foe, valuing their lives as does God, helping them with their material needs and pointing them as well to the One who came to save them. And when we fail (and we will), we know that with repentance, there is always forgiveness at the foot of the Cross.

As we transition to the new Church Year, we thank God for your Gospel-motivated voices for life and pray His richest blessings on you now and forevermore.