



St John Lutheran Church

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Text: Psalm 130

Theme: "Out of the Depths"

Funeral Sermon for Rose Schliep

Dear members of Rose's family as well as her church family: Grace, mercy and peace to you in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

As we gather here this day to talk of the life and death of our sister Rose, we do so with grieving and heavy hearts. **However, all of** the Christian's life **and most especially death**, must be seen through the life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ...**since** the death of our Lord has meaning for the entire life of the Christian... **including** and especially the time of his or her death... **I believe** it appropriate to speak of these two deaths **separated** by nearly two thousand years. **For death to** be something other than an unavoidable tragedy... **we must** hear of **and know** what Jesus' death has accomplished.

As you know, every Christian sermon tells us what the Lord God has done for us. **As a Christian pastor**, like Paul, I am determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2). **Therefore, permit me**, on the basis of Psalm 130 to tell you what the Lord God has done **for Rose, for you, for me** and for all of mankind. **Hear the** Word of the Lord from Psalm 130.

Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord!

Lord, hear my voice!

Let Thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities,

Lord, who could stand?

But there is forgiveness with Thee,

that Thou mayest be feared.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,

and in His Word I hope;

my soul waits for the Lord more

than watchmen for the morning,

more than watchmen for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord!

For with the Lord there is steadfast love,

and with Him is plenteous redemption.

And He will redeem Israel from all His iniquities.

The psalmist begins at the place where a man's life is being overwhelmed, inundated and flooded. **We might imagine** being in a small boat on the ocean when a hurricane strikes and the waves consume the craft in an instant. **One minute you** are safe inside the boat... **and the** next moment you are swept away. **While drowning** is not a particularly pleasant death... **it is** relatively quick as unconsciousness comes early on. **You don't have** a whole lot of time to ponder death and what it means for you.

But imagine a consuming death that takes a long time as your stranded boat slowly submerges over the period of years. **The waterline begins** at the ankles and proceeds slowly to the knees. **After a year** it comes to be waist deep... **then slowly** rises to chest high. **Then water level** creeps up to the neck. **Any higher** and the mouth will have to be closed. **As long as** one's nose is in the air one may remain alive. **So there we** are, at the point of physical death... **and being** there, what does one say to God?

That's what it must have been like for Rose in these last few years of her life ... **only** instead of it being water that rose up to overwhelm her, it was her failing health and her dementia. **And as** time moved on... **Rose continued** to grow weaker and weaker...**suffering with on** going and severe back pain and other maladies that seemed to constantly land her in the hospital.

Dear children of God, here was a woman, who loved to care for her family...**who loved** to teach the joys of her Jesus...**who loved** to help people and sew for people...**who loved** nothing better than to be a mother and grandmother and great grandmother...**and then** she became trapped in a slowly failing body. **Sometimes she was** angry about this...**sometimes she** was confused about this...**and sometimes** she was frightened by this! **Truly Rose Schliep** knew what the psalmist meant in the first verse of Psalm 130: **Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord! O Lord, hear my voice! Let Thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication!**

But this verse, and indeed, this psalm is not **primarily** about slowly drowning in the depths of the sea or gradually being overcome with the awful effects of failing health. **The condition this** psalm addresses is a spiritual one... **and deals** with a soul being overwhelmed with sin. **"If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?"**

"If You, O God, should keep a list of all the sins that are charged to me, how could I stand? If You marked off not only the sins I do, but the things I don't do that I should have done ... if You kept track, not only of the transgressions of my mouth concerning what I said that were sins, but also those times when You required me to speak and I kept quiet ... if You marked the iniquities and sins of my heart, O dear God, if you kept track of all these things, could I stand?"

The answer is a firm, **"No!"** **No one could** stand. **I couldn't. You couldn't. Rose couldn't. We are all** sinners and deserve to be consumed... **inundated... overwhelmed and drowned** in the depths of the Lake of Fire. **Being privileged to** be Rose and Bob's pastor...**Rose knew** she could not stand in the Lord's Light without her

Lord and Savior Jesus Christ's love and forgiveness! **She knew full** well she was a sinner! **But she also** knew and trusted in the Promise of life and forgiveness that her Lord gave her in her baptism in 1950 at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Oakland California.

Know listen to the Good News of God in Christ. **It is not** the desire of the Lord God that anyone be burdened with his or her sins. **The Lord has** laid all our iniquities upon His Son. **The Church's primary** mission and the pastor's great privilege is to tell the Good News of God's Word ... **to declare** not only the sin which condemns **but also** and especially to proclaim the Savior and His forgiveness that He earnestly desires to be yours. **"If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared."**

Dear people, behold Jesus the Son of God. **He takes the** guilt, the shame and the punishment of all your sins ... sins of thoughts, words and deeds and carries them to the cross. **Here He pays** the eternal price for them as the wrath of God is released upon Jesus instead of on you. **The shed Blood** of the Son of God cries out for your pardon and you hear His Words from the cross, **"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."** **The broken Body** of Jesus the Christ hangs on the cursed tree **and out** of the depths of hell He says, **"I thirst."** **Betrayed and denied** and crucified by man... **assaulted and** tortured by the forces of evil... **and the** true torment of hell...**that of** being abandoned by the Father... **Jesus cries out,** **"Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"** **Out of the** depths Jesus asks why... **and the** question of **"Why?"** was answered with silence from God.

Here, my friends, is what your sins cost Jesus. **Here also is** what your salvation is worth to Him. **Behold Jesus,** **"Who for the joy that set was set before Him, endured the cross (Hebrews 12:2)."** **What a privilege** for me to proclaim to you and for us to confess and pray, **"But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared."** **So here we are...** **at the** point of eternal, spiritual and physical death... **and being** here, what does one say to God? **"Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord!"** **Lord, hear my voice! Let Thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications! If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?"**

And God sends His Word and His messengers to proclaim it. **Dear Christian,** please know that you may say to the Almighty God, **"there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared."** **When the declaration** of sin forgiven and guilt removed is made, **your souls are clean** and the robe of Christ's perfect righteousness is yours. **Jesus announced the** completed atonement and sufficient sacrifice that He worked **and that He made** when He said, **"It is finished!"** **And to those** like Rose and you... **who know** the Savior... **who believe in** His sin-atonement death... **and who** trust in Him, the message of **"It is finished"** becomes effective to you and is, **"It is yours!"** **In Christ your** sins are no more. **In Christ, in** His death... **death is** no more and His resurrection is yours! **Christ is literally your life!** **This is what** Rose believed and confessed here in this congregation when she taught many...**many Sunday School** children about her Jesus over the years....**this is** what she taught her children and grandchildren over the years...**and this** is what she lived as a devoted and faithful Christian even as her health failed.

So Rose, with her soul healed and cleansed... **and with** her body continuing to deteriorate... **Rose waited faithfully for the Lord. At all times... but especially** at such times when death nears, **the Christian's hope** is in God and in His Word. **The Word of** God's Promises in Christ are what sustain the Christian with the hope that does not disappoint. **Our Lord is** faithful and He never fails us. **Dear Christian,** the strength to remain faithful unto death is the strength that the Lord gives to His people through His Word and Sacraments. **For with the** Lord there is steadfast love, and with Him is abundant redemption. **And He will** redeem Israel (the Church) from all his iniquities. **And so, just** as the repentant thief heard Jesus speak the Promise of salvation from the cross on that first Good Friday and departed this life to be with the Lord... **so also,** on September 21, of this

year, Rose became the beneficiary of the same Promise, "**Truly I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.**"

At the ninth hour on Good Friday we hear Jesus speak from the cross for the final time. **Out of the** depths of darkness, **the Light of the world** is revealed and glorified. **Out of the** depths of dehydration... **the Living** Water pours Himself out for the sins of the world. **Out of the** depths of pain... **the True** Manna come down from heaven is broken for mankind. **Out of the** depths of hell... **the conquering** King, now nearly dead, has spent Himself for all people. **Out of the** depths of the Sufficient Sacrifice, the Son of God speaks to the One Who sent Him, "**Father, into Thy hands I commit My Spirit! And having said this, He breathed His last.**"

Because Christ died for Rose's sins, for your sins and my sins and the sins of the whole world... **Rose's sins** are no more, your sins are no more, and for all who believe in Christ, **their sins** are no more. **Because Christ has** risen from the dead, and because He lives eternally....**all who** trust in Him, have His Life and so live eternally. **Dear friends, we** mourn our sister's passing but we take heart as she now lives with her Lord who has gathered Rose to Himself where she will live forever. In the Name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit...Amen. **Read Obit, now.**

Funeral for Rose Schliep

Rev. Eric M. Christiansen

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