



## St John Lutheran Church

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Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:3-5

Funeral sermon for Mildred Baker

**We began with** Mildred's funeral service with the invocation of the Christian Church... **"In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."** **That's appropriate,** for those are the words...**that is** the Name...**with which** Mildred was baptized. **That was the** beginning for Mildred, really... **when she** was baptized as a young child on August 30, 1936... **and had** the Name of the Triune God placed on her. And it did indeed mean something very special and very powerful for Mildred...for God Himself put His name on her!! **It meant that** the Triune God then and there claimed her for his own... **that she** belonged to Him. **This is a** tremendous thing, my friends. **For when Mildred** was baptized in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit... **the Father** then became her Father... **the Son** became her Savior... **and the** Holy Spirit became her Sanctifier and Life-Giver.

**In Holy Baptism** God the Father took Mildred as His own dear child. **In Baptism, the** Father took Mildred into His Mighty, ever-loving and everlasting arms... **and He** will never let her go. **Our heavenly Father** loves Mildred even more than any of us do. **Remember that He** gave His very own Son for her...**and not** just her but all who would believe!

**And then there** are her sorrows...**what about** them?? **How could God** be a kind and loving Father... **when He** let Mildred go through all that she suffered? **And indeed, Mildred** did have her sorrows. **Disease racked her** body in recent years and caused her so much pain and weakness and suffering. **As a young** woman, she lost a husband to cancer and that also caused her pain.

**How could Mildred** believe that God was her kind and loving Father, in spite of all that? **She did... I know she** did...we talked about it many times over the last couple of years. **Her faith in** God's goodness was strong...**absolute! Mildred knew that** God loved her very much and had something much better in store for her, right around the corner. **The ultimate healing** was on its way.

**Now she has** begun to enjoy that healing. **Now Mildred is** at rest, with her Lord. **And because she** is with the Lord....there is No more pain... **no more** sorrows... **no more** tears. **And that healing** will be completed at the Last Day... **when Christ** will come again and raise up this mortal body... **which we** entrust to the earth today. **He will give** her a new and glorified body... like His Glorious Body!! **This is our** hope as Christians... **this is** God's sure and unshakable promise. **This is what our sister** believed and trusted! **This was and is her** certainty!

**Mildred believed that** God was her kind and loving heavenly Father... **in spite** of all the sorrows. **And we** should as well. **For God is** your Father also. **He loves you** very much... **each and** every one of you. **He will not** let your bear more than He will give you the strength to handle. **The Father is** assuring you of His love today. He knows what pain death causes. He knows the hole that is left in your hearts at Mildred's passing. He knows you loved Mildred and hated to see her go and you will miss her greatly. **God knows that. Your Father knows** your other sufferings as well, whatever they may be.

**And here is** how you can know with certainty...**the same** certainty that Mildred was given... **the certainty** that God still loves you... **no matter** what: **The answer is** found at the Cross of our Lord. **For God** so loved the world...**for God** so loved you...**that He** gave His only Son... **that you** who believe in Him should not perish but have eternal life. **This is the** amazing grace of God... **that He** should love us so much that He would willingly sacrifice His Son for each one of us! **This is how** you know God loves you... **no matter** what... **by simply looking** to the Cross of Christ. **If God did** not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all... **then we** can know for sure that nothing...**no disease...no weakness... no pain... not the** loss of our loved one.... **nothing will** be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**For it is** in the sorrows of Christ we find our peace and our healing. **There... on that** Cross the Holy Son of God died for the sins of the world. **Jesus paid** the price for all our rebellion against God... **all of our** failures toward our brothers and sisters... **all this** big ugly mess of sin that afflicts us all... **and infects** us all... **and finally** kills us all. **Jesus took it** all on Himself and carried it to the Cross... **there on** that Cross 2000 years ago...**your sins** died with Him. **And sin did** die. **The debt is** paid... **the sin** is atoned for... **your guilt** is removed... **and death** itself is conquered. **Christ did all** that for you by His death on the Cross. **And to show** that He had removed the barrier of sin and destroyed the power of death... **Christ Jesus** then rose from the grave on Easter morning... **showing forth** the victory that He now shares with those who trust in Him. **Those who through** the Power of Word and Sacrament and the work of the Holy Spirit now trust in Christ and rest in His Peace!

**This is what** it means for you ...**and for** Mildred ...**that you** are baptized in the Name of the Triune God. **Not only has** the Father become your Father... **the Son** likewise has become your Savior...**and the Spirit** dwells in you so that you are never left desolate...**that you** are never alone! **For you ...and me... and Mildred...we have** all been baptized into Christ's death

and resurrection. **This means that** when Christ went into His tomb...**He carried** your sins with Him...**and there** they remain! **This is where** the words from the Remembrance of Baptism come into play: "**Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like his.**"

**What great comfort** this gives us... **what great** hope this affords... **to know** that in our baptism we have been joined to Jesus in His death and burial and resurrection! **It means that** our sins are forgiven... **all our** sins washed away in the waters of Holy Baptism. **It means that** the old man of sin is dead and buried... **and that** we are new people in Christ... **clothed in** the white robe of Christ's righteousness. **It means that** this body we place in the grave today will be raised up... **new and glorious... when Christ** comes again. "**For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His.**" **Our risen and** ascended Lord Jesus will not let His brothers and sisters be apart from Him. **Christ has bought** and paid for us with His own Body and Blood...**His own** life and death! **Mildred's soul** is with her Savior right now... **at home** and at peace... **forever. And she awaits** the blessed hope of all the baptized... **the resurrection** of the body at the Last Day.

**Baptized in the** Name of the Father and of the Son...**and of** the Holy Spirit. **Yes, the Holy Spirit** became Mildred's Sanctifier and Life-Giver when she was baptized. **The Holy Spirit** gave her faith in her Savior and kept her in that true faith unto the end. **The Spirit was** at work in Mildred, working through the Gospel... **through the** Word and the Sacraments that Mildred received at church throughout her lifetime. **And when she** became too weak to make it here to church... **we brought** church to her... **bringing her** the Word and the Sacrament in her home or at her hospital bed. **Through it all** Mildred's faith never wavered! **Her Lord was** always with her! **She was so** tiny and appeared so weak...**but oh** what power and will was wrapped up in that

slight body. If you knew Mildred at all...you never felt that she was weak at heart. **She reminded me** of a slight tick of dynamite...**for dynamite** is thin and comes in small packages...**but that's** what was deceiving... **for our** Mildred was a powerhouse of strength. **Strength of her** God given faith...**strength of** her indomitable will.

**It really is** a miracle, folks... **when someone** is baptized. **God is beginning** a lifelong work in that person. **Eternal life long!** **For God to** put his Name on you...**as God** placed his name on Mildred...**means that** God is committing Himself to you for the long haul. **You and Mildred** have a Father who loves you very much... **who cares** for you through all the ups and downs and sorrows of this life. **You have a** Father who loves you so much He gave His Son to die for your salvation. **And so you** are baptized into the death and resurrection of that Son, Jesus Christ. **You are robed** with His righteousness... **you have** the forgiveness of sins, which in turn leads to the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. **You have the** Holy Spirit to guide and guard and keep you in this faith unto the end... a blessed end in His eternal Kingdom!

**And yes, Mildred** did have a blessed end... **despite all** appearances to the contrary. **It was a** blessed end, because it was a death in the faith... it was falling asleep in Jesus. **And that means the end is really just the beginning.** In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

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