

Only in God
(Psalm 62)
By John Michael Talbot (1980)

Old Orchard Church

October 2, 2011 — 10:15 to 11:50 a.m.

On this mountain the LORD Almighty
will prepare a feast of rich food
for all peoples,
a banquet of aged wine....
On this mountain he will destroy...
the sheet that covers all nations;
He will swallow up death forever.

~ Isaiah 25:6-8 ~

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Celebrating Jesus Christ: Conqueror of Death

The sin of Adam means the kiss of death
For every human being alive.

War, terrorist bombings, sniper bullets;
Cancer, heart attacks, car wrecks—

Sooner or later there will be a funeral for every last one of us.

But thanks be to God!

A new man has appeared on earth;

A God-man, himself murdered,

Now is risen from the dead

Into the glory of an indestructible life!

He holds the key to the Prison-house of Death,

And all who turn to him shall be set free;

All who repent of their death-deserving sin shall be given
new bodies in the Life to come!

All who love Jesus, having once died, shall live forever.

Alleluia!



Scripture Readings

Old Testament Lesson: Psalm 110

New Testament Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Sermon

“Dynamic Tension: Community and Mission”

Acts 2:42-47

Currie Bishop, ruling elder and former intern, preaching

Nothing Lasts—Except The Grace Of God

No tribute to our dear Cathy [1954-1988], would fulfill its purpose if *GRACE* were not its theme. For any who may wonder at her life or wonder about its motives, pause here—at *GRACE*. Grace means Gift. That Gift is Jesus Christ, her and our embroidered across some little person’s overalls, sometimes in the setting of a table, sometimes working far into the night on a banner designed to lead God’s people in worship, sometimes with her hands deep in the kitchen sink, sometimes flowing out in the arrangement of some Maine rocks and shells in a centerpiece, sometimes—as she did less than an hour before she died—by giving her husband a kiss. Grace is like that—a many-splendored thing.

Cathy served gladly where she found herself, as the mistress of a large brood of children and the wife of a church officer. She did common things uncommonly well. She decided to make our home a work of art, surrounding us with glimpses and tastes of that Beauty which neither fades nor changes. Paper-cuts fell like snowflakes from her hands; also meals for new mothers and the sick; shortbread in a pretty box for someone at Christmastime; and—at the last—letters and cards of encouragement to all who had expressed concern for her.

Cathy sang a lot—and not just in church or in the shower. With a heavy burden of work, squabbling children and health problems, she sang in order to survive. Fueled by the forgiveness that is the Gift’s central theme, she pressed on. When the power of song left her, faithful church friends took up the slack and sang to her, so that her cup would always run over.

Now that her race is run, we can declare that she ran it well, not out of any compulsion to speak well of the dead, not forgetting she had faults. Part of running well is to confess faults, and then, undismayed, to keep going; this she did. And now, at last, her life-long hope is fulfilled: to see her Lord face to face.

It remains only to say how blessed our family has been to share her life intimately; what an honor to have tasted her joys with her and to have held her hand during her sufferings! What’s more, we have witnessed the Gift in its manifold expressions through so many of you here tonight, and thousands besides who are separated by time and space but present by their thoughts and prayers. Over the last year we have rejoiced in that Gift over and over again as it reached us in the form of a casserole, a scribbled note stuck somewhere it could not be missed, a check, housecleaning, child care, a visit with talk and a prayer, tapes of specially selected music or Scripture, photographs of people cheering us on, the loan of a car, even a late-night haircut—the list goes ever onward. This is just as it should be, considering the source.

Accept this as a tribute to yourselves as well as to Cathy. You gave, prayed and strove with us for her life: and then she died. But love lives on. And now we all know better than ever before: *NOTHING* Lasts—except the grace of God.

—Dick Watt, 1988