

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Last week, I was in Westby, and noticed a Gulf Oil slogan posted at the ZzipStop gas station and convenience store. It read, "**Life...one mile at a time.**" The sign made me stop and think--Are we going one mile at a time, one step at a time, or at some unknown, variable speed?

At times during these past 11-months of the Coronavirus Pandemic, it has felt like we were going quickly, zipping along one mile at a time. Things were sometimes coming at us so fast, that we didn't have time to stop and think! We had to adjust our homelives, our classes, our workplaces, our travels, our worshiping styles, our visits to stores, and more. Doing so often required extra planning, in order to do what we had done easily and quickly in the past.

But, at other points during these past 11-months, it has felt like we were going soooooo slow...ly...taking one step at a time. This was, and continues to be the reality that we are living in. Yet, it is a crucial reality, and one not to be taken lightly. We need to tend to the realities in the world, for our own well-being and for the well-being of others.

Today, we begin the season of Lent. On this day, Ash Wednesday, we take our first steps, or perhaps we would say, we begin our journey taking life as it comes. We do this as we walk with Jesus during the 40-days of Lent. How will this walk seem to us this year? Will it be fast and furious, slow and steady, frantic, or leisurely? No doubt, we may wonder if life will be taking us one mile at a time, or one step at a time. We may also wonder--Do we have the stamina to go on this journey this year?

As Interim Bishop Boerger says in his sermon for today,

We are about a people of the cross, knowing that God enters into our daily lives in all aspects of our lives, not just the good ones. That God is present in the midst of the hurting, the crying, the undecided, the terrified, and even us. That God is there for us, with us, calling us, challenging us, encouraging us, forgiving us, giving us hope. Hope that does not disappoint, but hope that says we can face the world as it really is.

Life...one mile at a time, or one step at a time? As long as we walk with Jesus, we can "face the world as it really is." Let us walk with Jesus, today and every day. Thanks be to God.

Peace,

Pastor Cathy