

July 16, 2016  
1 Corinthians 15:51-57

Funeral of Pat Eggebraaten  
"I'll Win Either Way"

*To Wendy, Kristi, Stacey, Tim, grand-children, great-grandchildren, other family members, friends, community members, members of Trinity Lutheran Church and to you Ken, Grace, mercy, and peace be yours from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.*

When I knew this day was coming, I was fearful that I would not be able to be here today, and that is what happened. I want everyone to do know that you are in my thoughts and prayers today and have been through Pat's cancer, treatments, time on hospice, and at her death.

Today is a day no one looks forward to, yes, we do know where Pat is today. Her soul is with Christ and her body lay before you today. We know that death isn't going to hold victory. We know Pat through the Christ's Sacrificial Death and Victorious has now won, even though she appears to have lost. Even with that said, today is no easy day.

Pat told me many times and told many people throughout her cancer that no matter what happens, "I'll win either way." She'll win if she defeated cancer and she would win if cancer defeated her and she went to live with Christ. Today Pat is with her Lord.

Today though, I want to share with you about life...not death. Life of two people. First, Pat. Pat was born in Crookston, MN on May 30, 1938 to Luis and Jean. Later on Pat was born by water and the Word through Holy Baptism where Christ claimed her as one of His dearly loved children. Pat was loved by her Lord and Pat loved her Lord. She grew in faith throughout her younger years and into her adult years when she joined Trinity after meeting Ken. As she grew in her faith even after joining Trinity she shared her faith to the children teaching Sunday School for many years, helping with various functions at the church, and so much more. Her faith was important to her and it showed in all aspects of life, including her family and community.

As Pat grew in years along with her brother Dale, she met a special person who was out "picking up" girls with a friend of his. That's you Ken. Through that encounter, your courtship and your wedding day on March 12, 1960 over 56 years ago, you've grown to love her. Yes, you've had hard days and good days. You've had your challenges. Pat loved you dearly and through your marriage four blessings came into your life...Wendy, Kristi, Stacey, and Tim through them many grand-children and great grand-children. She loved all of you very much. I could always tell how much family meant to her when I would walk by your house and see many cars, people in the backyard and so much family fun, laughter, and cheer.

Pat loved her Lord, loved her family, and loved her community. Pat had the privilege of serving her community for 28 years as the Postmaster here in Fisher. She knew everyone by name. She knew more about them and they knew about themselves. She had a bowl of tootsie rolls for those who visited and dog treats for her favorite little friends that came into post office. She showed her love to the community by not only in her career, but also by serving the kids at the school by reading to them and even being a "storm home".

It wasn't just her Lord, family, and community that she showed her love too. She also showed love to complete strangers. Over the past weeks I have heard stories of how she looked out for those who didn't have much. The guy who didn't have enough money to buy a slice of pizza at Sam's Club to the young lady at the airport who she gave a Starbucks muffin to. She was one that loved doing Random Acts of Kindness. She even was a bell-ringer for the Salvation Army.

She was cheerful lady. She was bubbly, optimistic and through everything the love of Jesus flowed through her.

As we know Pat was diagnosed with cancer 16 months ago. That was a struggle but whenever I came to see Pat, she had a smile on her face even if she wasn't feeling well. She had the smile on her face and her sassy attitude through the end. A week ago Thursday I visited Kenny and Pat along with trusted partner Simon. I put Simon up on Pat's hospice bed and she had the biggest smile on her face. She had a great attitude and she knew that she would win either way.

But today it doesn't like a victory. It doesn't look like that at all. For Patricia Jean Eggebraaten is dead. She is no longer alive. Her empty body lay before you today. Now you feel the emptiness without Pat living and walking and talking with you. The smile of Pat's is gone, but won't soon be forgotten. That smile that you will remember, will point to the fact that Pat was cheerful, she was happy, she loved people because Christ first loved her.

That's the second person I want to share with you this morning. He's the main person I want to share with you this morning. Jesus Christ chose Pat; He wrote her name in His book of life. The love of Jesus Christ shown through Pat.

Today as we heard in our readings, we heard about life. We heard about victory. We heard about the fact that death is not the end. Death will have no sting at the end. Today, death appears to have won. Today, death stings. Death came into the world because of sin. It's in the world not because Adam and Eve just sinned...sure we've inherited it from them, but death is in the world because of your sin, and mine, and Pat's sin. Pat confessed with her mouth that she was a poor miserable sinner. She also confessed with her mouth and believed in heart that Jesus Christ is Lord. She confessed and sang the words, "I know that my Redeemer Lives."

I can be certain that even though today stings. This is not Pat's final state. She will live again. For as St. Paul writes in our text, <sup>53</sup> *For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.* <sup>54</sup> *When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."* <sup>55</sup> *"O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"* <sup>56</sup> *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.* <sup>57</sup> *But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* <sup>1</sup>

God is giving Pat the victory through her Lord Jesus Christ. When Pat lives again because of the promise of Christ – this death that Pat has died will be swallowed up in victory. There will no victory for death, there will not sting for death. Pat will live again because of the victory given to her in her Savior Jesus Christ.

Pat knew that she was going to win. I am sure she also knew that she didn't win because of anything she did. She knew she couldn't. She knew she was going to win, but Christ already won the battle for her.

She was claimed in baptism, she took into her mouth the very body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of her sins. I had the privilege to lay my hands on her head on Sunday afternoon and speak the Absolution to her...she couldn't communicate, but her sins

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<sup>1</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version.* (2001). (1 Co 15:52–57). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

were forgiven in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. What sweet comfort it is to know that Christ chose Pat and forgave her sins. What sweet comfort it is to know that He came to die for Pat and to live for Pat and to grant Pat life.

He didn't just come for Pat...he came for all of you. He died for all of you. He died so that you don't have to die eternally. Yes, we will all meet our graves, unless the Lord returns. We will all meet our physical deaths, but Christ will also give you the victory along with Pat when Christ comes back and as I picture it, he will reach his hands into the graves of his saints and pull them to live on this earth that will be renewed. Pat will live in paradise, even as her soul is with the Lord and waits the end of the age along with us all for the return of Christ.

Remember those smiles of Pat, remember those acts of kindness of Pat, remember the love that Pat showed you. You've all experienced it, whether that be as a friend, as the post master for many years. You've experienced it as her neighbor, her Sunday school student. You've experienced her love as grandchildren, great-grandchildren. You've experienced her love as daughters and son. You've experienced her love as husband. Through her you've experienced the love of Jesus Christ.

She wanted to confess with this service that she's won because of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has given her that victory. Today we will leave here resting in the comfort of the promise of the resurrection. Today God gives you the comfort and the hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Today, you will cry and laugh, you will shed tears of joy and sadness. You will be happy and sad. That's all normal. If I could physically be with you today, I would also have tears in my eyes. The smile and love that Pat showed me will never be forgotten. Together with Pat I confess that "My Redeemer Lives." I confess that Death is swallowed up in victory and that death no longer has sting.

You will sing these words in the closing hymn that speaks to this confession: "For the sheep the lamb has bled, Alleluia! sinless in the sinners stead, Alleluia!. Christ the Lord is ris'n on high, Alleluia! Now He lives no more to die. Alleluia!" Christ Jesus went to the cross for you, for Pat. Christ Jesus lives for you, for Pat.

Now he lives no more to die. Indeed, physical death yes, eternal death. No way. Physical death is but the gate to life immortal for His Saints.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

*Now may the peace of God which passes all human understanding, guard your hearts and your minds and keep them focused in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior. Amen.*