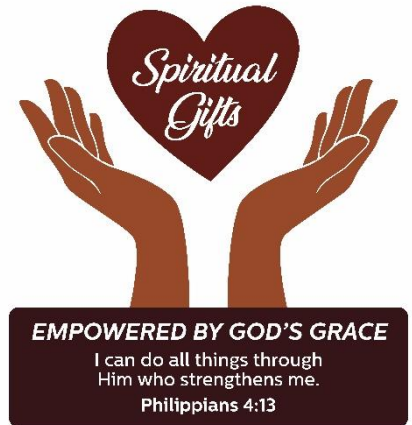


Fall Retreat devotion 2022

Empowered by God's Grace

Phil 4:13 "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."



Empower is one strong and ambitious word. Given a little meditation and you might even say it is mind boggling. Especially when it comes to the spiritual realm. So, to claim that we are "Empowered by God's Grace", we need to ask, empowered by whom and empowered for what.

An outside source needs to be identified if any empowering is to be done. On our own, we are no better than dead men. That is to say that before being chosen as children of God, we were far from empowered to accomplish anything that would benefit the growth of God's Kingdom. This empowering comes from God, the Almighty, when he called us, in baptism, to be his children. Romans 6:4 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.

This newness of life, a gift from God's grace, is what gives us the power to do what He wills. In short, it is God empowering each of us. But for what????

We need only to turn to St. Paul's words in I Corinthians 12:4-6. "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone."

The use of the gifts God has given us is the ultimate evidence of God's empowerment in each of our lives. It is the divine twist of God's wisdom that He now gives us the responsibility of sharing in His love so that others may be empowered, first to receive God's gift of grace and then to use their gifts to the glory of God. How mind boggling is that! God empowers us so that He may empower others. May we never take this gift for granted but earnestly plead with God that we make the most of His empowerment in our lives.

Prayer: God of the universe, stand with us in this time of great need among your people. So many people are struggling to find purpose and meaning in life. And we know that you are the only One to provide answers first with the gift of forgiveness and redemption and secondly with gifts to proclaim Your grace to others. Thank you for empowering us through the gift of baptism, Word and Sacrament. May we never fail to recognize and acknowledge the sacrifice this took through the death of Your Son, Jesus. Empower us each day to recognize our God given gifts and to use them to Your glory for the sake of Jesus in whose name we pray. Amen.