



Grand Prelate's Monthly Message

OCTOBER 2024

Sir Knights,

At the end of September, I attended a 4-day men's retreat in the mountains. During that time, I enjoyed watching the onset of the changing colors of the leaves. This time of year gives us the opportunity to stop and appreciate the majesty and handiwork of God that surrounds us. Fall provides us a time to enjoy the beauty of God's creation. It harkens back to Psalm 19:1, "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."

As beautiful as the colorful leaves are, I have been reminded that those leaves also mean that I will need to break out the rake and spend time removing all of those leaves in my yard. But I'll take a rake over a snow shovel any day.

The truth about these colorful leaves is that the color has been there all along. It has just been hidden by the green. The green is caused by the chlorophyll, that is activated by sunlight, and enables the leaves to nourish the trees. As the days grow shorter, and the season changes, the chlorophyll levels drop and allow the leaves to reveal their true colors.

The beauty of God's handiwork in nature can teach us a lot. And that includes lessons in the falling leaves of autumn. Every year God replenishes the leaves on a tree. Every year he gives us colors that are beautiful and exhilarating. Every year he lets the leaves fall to the ground and decompose in order to nourish the ground below.

God is always taking care of his world in quiet ways. In ways that we might miss. God is also always giving us evidence that he is with us when he does this. It is the way God "whispers" his presence to us in a reassuring manner. If we listen closely, and watch carefully, God will show us his love and presence in a lot of surprising ways.

Isaiah, the prophet, writes in Isaiah 55:12, "You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands."

A lesson we can learn from the leaves is to let our true colors shine through. Just like the true color of the leaves remains hidden by the green throughout summer, we sometimes let the daily rigors of life hide our true colors. To prevent this, we need to remind ourselves that the God who made the universe, who holds all things together by the power of his word; who paints majestic masterpieces day after day, month after month, year after year; who fills all things and is bigger than the universe, literally lives in us when we surrender our lives to him. And that makes each one of us as special and as spectacular as the colorful leaves on the fall trees. God paints our lives with the same colorful brushstrokes that he uses to paint the mountainsides in the fall. We must never forget that God is painting a picture that shows his majesty, his love, and his amazing grace. By looking at our lives, just as we look at the autumn trees, others should be able to say without a doubt that there is a loving, amazing God in charge and still in control.

We are blessed to be able to look outside and see the changing colors of fall, the beautiful handiwork of our God. Never take that for granted as we go through each day. Instead, consider the changing colors of the trees, and remember to be an example to the world, showing off the love of Christ, the true beauty within.

Always and All Ways in Christ

Rick Saunders

Grand Prelate