

July 10, 2021

Letter to the AZ branch of COTL from Provisional Coordinator, Deacon Dave Knebelberger

Brothers and sisters,

I received this text on Sunday morning from Peter Walterscheid:

*"Guys, I stumbled onto Ecclesiastes 3 this morning. Verses 1 & 2. Look it up. That's where we are this week!"*

Of course, I was curious, so I looked it up. Here are those two verses:

*"There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens. A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant."*

Peter had sent his text to our men's Formation District fellowship group because Paul Bui had just texted all of us the following text:

*"Love you all. Went to St. Joe's this morning. In a room now. We are going to have a 4th of July baby! Please keep my wife and daughter in your prayers."*

Paul was sharing his love, joy and excitement with our men's group and asking for prayers for a safe delivery for his wife and unborn daughter. On the other end of the spectrum, Peter and Kelly were still mourning the loss of their daughter, Sarah, from a tragic car accident only 6 days earlier. Of course, this is one of a parent's worst nightmares, to have to bury one of their children. But Peter was searching for answers and God, in His goodness allowed Peter to "stumble" across the "a time to be born, and a time to die" passage from Ecclesiastes.

Isn't this what Community life is all about... sharing our greatest joys and also sharing our deepest sorrows with one another? Life is difficult, but can you imagine how much more difficult life would be without God and without Community? We are called to be there for each other and share not only in each others joys, but each other's sorrows.

Over the last couple of years being with the Formation District, I have been amazed at how these young families have pulled together. They have grown close to each other formed a tremendous bond. It is not unusual for them to say how much they love each other and love spending time together. Our first agreement states:

*"We agree to love, support, serve and honor one another, as brothers and sisters in Christ."*

In a note to the Community, Peter and Kelly wrote:

*“The Walterscheid family has been overwhelmed with the love, prayers, and support from so many friends. Words cannot express our gratitude for the love we have received.”*

In the slightly relaxed pace of summer, let us continue to overwhelm each other with “love, prayers, and support” as brothers and sisters in Christ. I hope to see many of you at our Lord’s Day Potluck dinner tonight. Even if you didn’t RSVP, just bring some food and show up anyway; we’re meeting in the main hall tonight, so we have plenty of space.

Let us continue to pray for each other in COTL to be more open to the gifts of the Holy Spirit and “to place our lives under the reign of the Lord Jesus, to love and serve our God and one another with our whole lives and to follow His plan wherever it may lead us, as members of the CITY OF THE LORD” (COTL Preamble).

God bless,

Dcn Dave