
Thy Will Be Done

**An article from the *Cathedral Times*
By the Rev. Deacon Juan Sandoval**

Growing up in Phoenix, Arizona, I frequented our church, Saint Anthony's, with my grandmother Juanita. She was always doing something at the church. She would bake pastries to sell and give the proceeds to the church. She would make candied apples to sell and give the proceeds to the church. She would wash and press the priest's garments. She would take home the altar linens and wash and press them. Being only four years old, I remember that she often came by to take me with her to the church. I didn't realize the impression her acts of love and kindness would make on me until I was much older.

I still to this day often think about what she did and how I see all that others do in our beloved Cathedral of St. Philip. *Thy will be done*. Words we probably say at least once a day if we pray one of the daily offices or include it in our own prayers. Perhaps we don't often think about what that small phrase and those four words connote. It is followed by: *on earth as it is in heaven*. God is asking each of us to do God's will during our time in our transitional journey on earth.

God has given us free will and thus we can elect to be empowered by this. Whatever we choose to experience, we should do so to the will of God. Many of God's chosen are those who have said "Yes, here am I, Lord." Think about the many personalities in the Bible and how they did God's will on earth. Moses leading the Hebrews out of Egypt, Paul being converted and becoming a powerful ally of the Way. Mary being chosen to bear God incarnate, Jesus.

We should ask these two questions of ourselves: Who are you? What are you doing here? This is a form of discernment that should assist each of us throughout our lives. As we grow in different ways, we should re-ask these two questions of ourselves as we continue our earthly pilgrimage.

Baptism is the gateway to serving God's people and doing God's will. In our baptismal covenant and when we renew our vows, we say words that should guide our works or acts. Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ? *I will with God's help*. Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself? *I will with God's help*. Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being? *I will with God's help*.

Laity is the largest order in the Episcopal church. If we could all see the work accomplished here at the Cathedral, one would see the hundreds of lay persons who lead or participate in ministries: those who lead Bible studies, those who prepare what is needed for each service, who assist in specific functions such as Funeral Guild, Flower Guild, Wedding Guild, acolytes, vergers, teachers, Godly Play, lay readers and ushers. These are just a few of so many ways our faithful serve God and do God's will.

These works do not stop when we walk out of the doors of the Cathedral; doing God's will extends into the world. Loving our neighbors as ourselves and doing God's will in the community. We might assist at a food pantry, we might drive someone to an appointment, we might provide foot care for the homeless, or provide advocacy for those in need. These acts of love and kindness are endless and sometimes seemingly unnoticed deeds. I say by God's love and mercy we continue the work in all of the world.

In Isaiah 6, we hear his commission: *Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!"* Are we ready to say, "here am I," and step out in faith to do the work the Lord calls us to do?

Go into the world to love and serve the Lord!

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