

+ Doris Bissitt +
Revelation 7:9-12

In the name of Jesus. Amen.

"These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Dear saints of Christ Our Savior and guests, friends and family of Doris, Julie and Stanley...the beatific vision which the apostle St. John was privileged to see, the host arrayed in white, was of a time beyond time, the Church Triumphant in bright array, a multitude which no one could count at the Feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end. It's the life eternal to which all who in Christ aspire, and that to which our dearly departed Doris is but one step closer.

She now rests from all of her labors. She is now gone out from the great tribulation, this existence in the Vale of Tears in which you still live, battered about, as it were, by every care and concern, worry and anxiety that befalls man in his corrupt state. Chaos reigns here. Brother strives against brother, which you hear about from Cain and Abel, and see throughout history and into today. All manner of evil is spoken against you who are in Christ for the mere fact that you are in Christ.

This is the Great Tribulation that the angel spoke about, a life fraught with danger all the way. For some, the tribulation is but mere hatred, a snide comment or an awkward look from an unbeliever. Others lose their lives and their very heads for the confession of Jesus the Christ as Savior of the world.

Come what may, however, all who are in Christ have eternal life to look forward to, a time beyond time when they are out of this great tribulation. It is the time after the judgment day when Jesus will say to His sheep, the elect, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world..." (Matthew 25:34) You who are in Christ and still breathing have this to look forward to, as well, but you must suffer yet a while here below.

For Doris, all that waits is the day of judgment when she will hear her Shepherd call to her after the blast of the last trumpet. On that great and dreadful day, all the dead will rise and she and all who are in Christ will be called into the everlasting kingdom of God and of His Christ. This corruption will put on incorruption, this mortal will be shed and put on immortality, and the saying that is written will be brought to pass, "Death is swallowed up in victory." (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:52-54)

For now, her remains, well, remain. Death is still present in what is left of her here. This is corruption. This is mortality. This was her lot in life, inherited from her first father by way of her earthly father. In Adam, all mankind is fallen. You see, in and of herself, Doris wasn't a great person. She wasn't even a good person. She was a sinner, like her father before her, like his father before him, etc. and so on. She was corrupt. She was mortal.

But, she is also beloved of God. Behold what manner of love the heavenly Father has bestowed on her, that she should be called a child of God! (cf. 1 John 3:1a) For God has loved Doris and all the world, that He sent His only begotten Son in the flesh to save her and all the world. (cf. John 3:16) No, she wasn't great, or even good, but God her Father and His only-begotten Son are. What goodness and friendship He showed, that Jesus, the only-begotten Son of God, took into His own holy flesh her sins and the sins of all the world, and died with them on the cross of Calvary. There, He shed His blood for her and for all of you.

And her robes were washed clean in His blood in a font much like this one here. As the water was poured over her combined with the Word of God and included in His command, she was made a saint and heir of salvation. There, she was given a righteousness that she didn't earn, but that was earned for her—for the sake of Jesus Christ! Now, her baptism is consummated. At the font she was

called a child of God, baptized into the death and resurrection of God-in-the-flesh, Jesus Christ. Now, she rests in Christ, safe in His keeping until the Last Day. She and her remains now await the resurrection of all flesh, a resurrection like unto that of Jesus Christ, to life immortal in His eternal presence with all who would be called saints for His sake.

There, in eternity, before His throne, they serve Him day and night. He who sits on the throne, Jesus the Christ, dwells among them. There, there is no hunger or thirst, no striking sun nor heat, but living fountains of water that spring forth from the throne of God. There, all tears will be wiped away from the eyes.

Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!
Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom,
Thanksgiving and honor and power and might,
Be to our God forever and ever.
Amen.

Dear saints of God in this place, you have that to look forward to as well; it was promised to you when your robes were washed clean in the blood of the Lamb when you received Holy Baptism. There, your hearts were purified and, following the resurrection of all flesh and blessed reunion with loved ones who have died with the sign of faith, you will see God—with your own eyes—and live! You will live forever in His presence and that of His Christ, your Lord and Savior, for by His Word and work, you are forgiven for all of your sins.

In the name of Jesus. Amen.