

## A HOMILY FOR REQUIEM LESSONS AND CAROLS

7:00 p.m.

September 11, 2002

Fr. P. S. Winton

St. David's Episcopal Church

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It was a dark moment in history;  
A moment that made us all breathless;  
A moment in which we witnessed events that caused us to question reality;  
A moment that made our hearts ache;  
A moment that thrust upon us the full madness of humanity;  
A moment that made us all wonder if the world would ever be the same;  
A moment after which we knew we would never be the same,  
Such a day was September 11, 2001 A.D.

The sky grew dark,  
The ground shook,  
The temples of capitalism fell,  
The fabric of a nation was wrent from top to bottom  
And we wept –  
Such a day was September 11, 2001 A.D.

In the horrific moments following the insanity which rained down upon the Pentagon Building a year ago today, military and civilian employees who survived the initial impact of the plane fought through mountains of rubble which a few moments ago was their work place – among the most secure in modern post modern civilization. As they stumbled along, breaking bones in an effort to escape the next explosion - for surely these were bombs falling upon them– for what else could it be? - they fought to see the lighted exit signs and arrows and the emergency lighting they knew to find above the doors and down the corridors, but the smoke from the burning jet fuel was so black they could see nothing. In order to breathe – in order to survive they knew they had to drop to their knees. Their fellow citizens trapped in the towers of New York City were having the same experience. The way to breath and light and life and hope – to survival – was on their knees.

By the sheer strength of American willpower, the damaged portion of the Pentagon has been completely rebuilt and was dedicated today. In the new portion of the building the exit signs and emergency lighting are a few feet above the floor level so that people trying to breath can see them – they are quite literally designed to be seen from one’s knees. What they learned is that people ultimately have to find their way out of great crisis on their knees.

And that, my beloved, is how we will find our way out of this crisis – on our knees. The signs are seen best from there. That is how we will find the light. That is how we will find the way. Perhaps we will have to pick our way slowly. Perhaps we will find a fallen friend along the way and bring them with us. Perhaps we will still come out bruised and broken – but we cannot stand and fight through the debris of life’s crises as if the landscape had not changed – we must finally drop to our knees if we are to find the way.

It was a dark moment in history;  
A moment that made us all breathless;  
A moment in which we witnessed events that caused us to question reality;  
A moment that made our hearts ache;  
A moment that thrust upon us the full madness of humanity;  
A moment that made us wonder if the world would ever be the same;  
A moment after which we knew we would never be the same  
Such a day was the day Christ died.

The Sky grew dark  
The ground shook  
The Temple fell;  
The fabric of the temple was wrent from top to bottom  
And we wept  
Such a day was the day Christ died.

God redeemed that terrible day.  
God will redeem September 11, 2001  
Because that is what God does.

If we want to see it – we must look for the signs – and those, those we have learned, are only  
seen from our knees.