

Greetings Brother, in the Name of the Epiphany Lord!

As pastors, we love the Epiphany season. It is the season of Light that goes out to the world, the Gospel of Jesus Christ for all people. It is also the season which bridges the busyness of Advent and Christmas to the busyness of Ash Wednesday, Lent and Holy Week. The Epiphany season might be a time where the parish pastor can catch his breath, yet Lent is right around the corner.

You might already be doing your Lenten season outlines. But some of you might be a little bit more like me where life and ministry make planning difficult. We’re dealing with the pandemic issue where we need to make extra phone calls, extra visits, extra prayers. We long to visit shut-ins, but we need to deal with the regulations. We visit the sick and dying in person where we can. If we can’t then we beg the hospital, nursing home, or hospice to please let us in just so we can visit the dying and give them comfort. If you have a school, then there are the extra responsibilities that go along with that in addition to having Plan B, C, D and E ready at a moment’s notice.

All this and more, along with family responsibilities has made this a very unique and stressful year for ministry. “Planning? I can barely keep my head above water!”

This is where your Rocky Mountain District Disabilities Ministry Task Force (DMTF) comes in. We are here to help resource the RMD in ways to not only raise awareness of ministry to people with disabilities, but also, we are here to encourage you to begin outreach to this underserved population. There are Advent and Lenten series to choose from, but there are few Epiphany series or helps available. That is—until now. The DMTF decided to write a series for the 2021 Epiphany season to help you out and to take away at least some of the stress of ministry.

I know that this is coming to you late. I have to apologize and ask your forgiveness. Parish responsibilities, along with family, recently demanded more of my time than I allotted to complete my portion of this series. The DMTF had their items ready in a timely fashion. It is on me that this is arriving to you tardily. However, it is my prayer that you can use this series at this late date to bring some relief to your schedule and offer a little more time for you to spend with your family and duties prior to the busyness of the upcoming Lenten season.

This series has three goals: a) to help you in your ministry; b) to raise awareness of ministry to people with disabilities; c) to help you build upon or give you and your congregation a couple of ideas to begin a ministry to people with disabilities on a shoestring budget.

The series is titled *God Speaks … Now What?* and is based on the Old Testament lessons for The Baptism of Our Lord (January 10) through Transfiguration Sunday (February 14). Included in each Sunday’s preaching and worship planning helps are: a) a short exegetical help for the Old Testament Lesson; b) an illustration focused on ministry to, or ministry with, a person with a disability (names have been changed); c) worship planning suggestions; d) a children’s message; e) a prayer for the Day to be used as the Collect, or to include in your congregational prayers. In addition, we have included a bulletin insert you can use that helps the congregation understand some subtle language to use and not use when speaking about or to people with disabilities.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. My email address is PstrRedeker@aol.com; mobile number is 314-608-5538.

On behalf of the entire DMTF, God’s richest blessings to you as you proclaim the Light of Christ to God’s people!

In Christ,

Rev. Michael Redeker; BBA-Marketing; M.Div., S.T.M.

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