

May 25, 2020 Memorial Day 2020

Memory is an important part of identity and memory is like the seasons in that it changes depending on the current conditions. While the idea of Memorial Day in our times tends to revolve around the wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, I would suspect that many young people have no idea of any of the details of those wars and this day becomes just the beginning of summer and a reason for cookouts and parties which is just the way it is so I am not making any kind of criticism just an observation.

How to Do Nothing by Jenny Odell is a very good book and if you are at all inclined to read something this summer, I would really recommend this book. It is filled with good insights and practical ideas one of which is the idea of "simple conviviality."

So here is what "simple conviviality" mean to me.

We had a wedding Saturday afternoon, Leslie Gouliaev and Robert Shimko committed themselves to each other for the rest of their lives in front of their family and friends. It was different in form what with masks and distance and so on, nut it was juts like your weddings, those of you who are married, in substance.

The bride was beautiful, the groom was nervous, the flowers were gorgeous, and Karin Jurek made the music absolutely spectacular.

How many people 75 and 80 years ago in our lineage married in very similar circumstances as the storm clouds of World War II shadowed their futures and we are here today as testimony to the fact that they meant what they said to one another.

This morning I had an email from a parish member asking about planting flowers in a pot in front of church and I told her I would have one pulled out for her to plant. I would do the same for you, if you just get in touch with me via a phone call 865.8956 x 304 or an email [nedgan@yahoo.com](mailto:nedgan@yahoo.com). I will get back to you ASAP.

Our music ministry is making music for you to listen to, all safely distanced but the same music we want to hear in church. It can be found on our Face

Book page and on our website and you can leave a message for Karin Jurek at 865.8956 x 302 to ask her how to do that if you need help or you can ask her to record music you want to hear. She will get back to you.

Many of you have taken to visiting in driveways with family and friends.

All of that is “simple conviviality,” just being with life as it is available not as you might want it but just as it is.

It is painfully obvious that many Americans are very stressed with life as it is and they need to make things happen because they live with the clock ticking and while I wish they could relax and just enjoy simple conviviality because they could learn that life ultimately is not a game of scarcity and envy but a bountiful presence here and now just as it is.

We have construed life as a contest of scarcity and envy, a competition with winners and losers. Our ancestors who lived through, perhaps, fought in and maybe lay buried in a field in France, lived life as it presented itself not as they wanted it, I hope we can do the same until the dead in this year of sorrow and sadness can be properly mourned because they found that their life as it was available to them was not as they would want it, either.