

[Reconstructed from notes.]

"Lead a life worthy of God."

A question: How many people here want all the best, fullness of joy,
for today's precious baptizee, Campbell,
that she grow up into her God-given potential?
Hands up -- Excellent!

Now . . . how many people here would be willing to get up
in the middle of the night to change her dirty diaper?
Quick – let's get the names of those beyond immediate family
whose hands are up!

I submit there's no contradiction between those two responses.
All of us have a job to do in the important work of nurturing her.

As we welcome Campbell into the Communion of Saints as known here,
our roles may differ
but we all have something far greater in common:
To lead lives worthy of God.
Because that's how Campbell will know what that looks like.

This phrase comes from today's first reading,
Paul's first letter to the folks in the ancient Greek city of Thessalonica.
"Like a father, I, Paul, urge/encourage/plead
that you lead a life worthy of God."
Even in this earliest letter, we know that Paul went on to do just this,
ultimately sacrificing his own life for the love of God in Christ.

In just a moment, we'll all be asked to stand and renew the Baptismal Covenant.
I think of this as marching orders for us as members of the Communion of Saints.
A job description for how to lead lives worthy of God,
how we model this for and inspire this in dear Campbell.

A description of the kind of community we are to be for her (and our other children) to grow up in.

Heed seriously these promises you are about to make.

In today's Gospel, Jesus warns against hypocrites. In a most cutting and devastating critique, he says: "Do whatever they teach . . . but *not* what they do. For they do not practice what they teach."

For the sake of Campbell,
for the sake of all our children,
and for the sake of our own souls –
Let it never be said of us to do as we teach but not as we do.
Let it never be said that we do not practice what we teach.

Rather, for the sake of Campbell and our other children,
and the sake of our own souls,
pray God that one day looking back
it be said that we did our best to live what we profess,
we fell short sometimes,
but we were there to uphold and challenge one another
to lead lives – and build a community – worthy of God.

Thanks be to God. Amen.