

Sunday, April 18, 2021 – Confirmation and Third Sunday of Easter

“Here I Stand”

Acts 3: 11-21

Rev. Derek S. Klemm, Mountain View Lutheran Church, Las Vegas, NV

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Five hundred years ago to the day – and in fact, to this very hour, being as how it is now the 4pm hour in Germany, Martin Luther stood before the Imperial Diet of Worms of the Holy Roman Empire, the name of the country that encompassed all of modern Germany and several other modern countries and parts of countries in central Europe. For our modern American parallel, it's like President's cabinet and the U.S. Congress are in a joint session deciding major affairs of government. He is asked to speak against the faith that He had put forward in his various writings that had taken Europe by storm. His teachings were the catalyst for major strife not only within the church but in the culture at large. When it finally came down to it, Luther was asked to pull his punches and hold back on speaking the faith that he believed God actually spoke through Scripture. What do you do?

This morning seven of our Confirmands will speak to their faith. *Here are their stories...*

[Confirmand Faith Statements]

Thank you to our Confirmands who couldn't help but speak the truth. When the truth is compelling, it needs to be told. That's what we see of Peter addressing Israel in Acts 3. The consequences of speaking the truth about Jesus to some of the very people who called for His crucifixion might have meant his own suffering and even death – nevertheless, the truth could not be bottled up. Jesus is God's Son, our Savior. That truth sets us free, no matter what may come! That's what Luther did, too. Sure, it wasn't easy – but he shared that his conscience could not abide speaking against something that he believed to be true. And he closed his comments by saying, “Here I stand, I can do no other – God help me.” That tradition continues through Luther and through our confirmands here this morning, but also into your life and mine. Christ fulfilled all the suffering the prophets before Him foretold. God has blotted out our sin and refreshes us with Jesus' presence right here among us today in His Word and in the Sacraments. And He is coming again to restore the world, as told long ago. There's no better news than that, it must be told, no matter the consequences! Why? So that by our words and by our example, people will see Jesus. We can do no other than speak that truth, whatever may come. Here I stand, I can do no other – God help me. In Jesus' name, Amen.