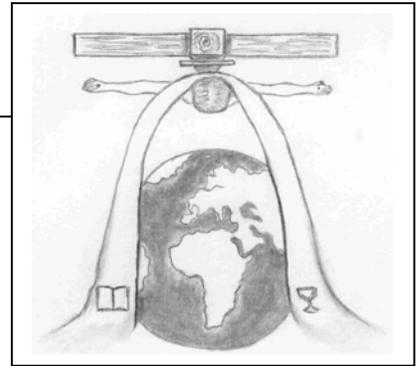


Good News for the Diaspora



Letter of Introduction

Dear Redeemed,

Such a reference – Redeemed – most certainly refers to you . . .

- . . . whoever you are,
- . . . wherever in the world you are,
- . . . whatever your situation.

You have been redeemed by Jesus, Who is the Son of God and Who was born of Mary. The Christ has paid the price for the sins of all people when He died on the cross. He defeated death when He rose again from the dead. Jesus is the Savior and Redeemer of the world, and therefore, He is your Savior and your Redeemer. This is the Gospel. This is the Good News of the Christian faith.

Therefore, Dear Redeemed, please know that since there is *Good News for the Diaspora!* What is the *Diaspora*? What does this mean?

Diaspora is a word describing the dispersion of God's people in the world. This scattering has taken place throughout the history of the world as the people of God have been sown in many lands at various times. Those whom the LORD God called to be His own were among the peoples scattered after the confusing day of the Tower of Babel, during the years following the Flood and at both times of the Babylonian Captivity of the Church. There was a dispersion following the witness of Stephen. For *on that day a great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the region of Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1)* and beyond those borders and extending down through the centuries to you today.

Peter, apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect ones sojourning in the Diaspora (1 Peter 1:1).

Thus did the Apostle Peter begin his epistle of hope when he wrote to the Christians who had been scattered in such places as Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. They needed to hear the Good News that they had been ransomed with the Blood of Christ Who died for all their sins. They needed to hear the Gospel that *we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and to an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Peter 1:3-5).*

The Lord wanted all to hear this Good News, whether the hearers of the Word were individual Christians, families, congregations of ten or a thousand. God provided the opportunity and means for His Word to go forth and accomplish His purpose.

This is no different today in terms of need. A brother seeks to have the Word of God's love in Christ. A family in New England is without a nearby congregation where the Word is preached in its truth and purity. A faithful remnant in Australia gather in the Name of the Holy Trinity. Two or three families isolated in one way or another. A soldier on duty. A sailor aboard ship. A traveler on assignment. Someone on vacation. A missionary. A police chaplain. A family. A woman in prison. A tiny congregation in the wilderness. A faithful pastor wrongly removed from his pulpit. Each one of them and more dispersed throughout the world desire to hear the truth of Christ crucified and risen. Too often they have to go without or on reduced rations.

The opportunities to proclaim the Word of God and the ability to do so have changed throughout the centuries. First there was Word of mouth in olden times. Then letters in the days of old were hand-copied and hand-carried. Later, in a gigantic leap, the printing press started cranking out pages in order to get the Word out. Today we are blessed with the internet and the ability to send the Word anywhere in the world in a few seconds.

Good News for the Diaspora began as a free, resource service on the scholia.net website and, hopefully, it will remain so. Now *Good News for the Diaspora* is adding a new medium for getting the Word out to you and others. The *scholia resource disk 2006* has been released and this introductory letter is the first file on it. This CD has resources for everyone – children, teens, parents, members of the military, pastors, congregations and even, and especially, for those who are not Christians.

(Note: If you are one who is a non-Christian, please know that this letter is also addressed to you. The [Dear Redeemed](#) at the top of this letter includes you; for, whether one believes it or not, Jesus has brought about forgiveness, eternal life and salvation for all people of all times. That includes you – whoever you are, wherever you might be – whatever your situation. Christians confess the truth that *if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and He is the Propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world – 1 John 2:1-2. For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the Gift of God, not because of works, lest anyone boast – Ephesians 2:8-9.* Therefore, [Dear Redeemed](#), this Good News is for you. May this resource CD be of benefit to you.)

The *scholia resource disk 2006* may be used by ...

... the individual

- when one is sick or a shut-in
- when one is traveling, on assignment, deployed
- when there is no pastor who preaches the Word in its truth and purity
- when there is no congregation with the Divine Service of Word & Sacrament
- when there is someone who has questions about the Christian faith
- when you or someone else needs a year's worth of daily devotions
- when someone is hurting in body and/or soul and needs encouragement
- when you or a loved one is in particular need to know that the LORD God cares

... the head of the house

- when the family is on vacation
- when the weather prevents the family from attending the Divine Service
- when there is no pastor who preaches the Word in its truth and purity
- when there is no congregation with the Divine Service of Word & Sacrament

... the missionary, the evangelist, the chaplain

- for personal meditation, edification and growth
- for calls
- for family visits
- for services in the field
- for prisoners

... the pastor

- for personal devotions, edification and growth
- for use when making sick, shut-in or hospital visits
- for members who missed a Sunday at Church
- for follow-up mailings to visitors
- for devotions at meetings
- for members in an area where there is no Divine Service of Word and Sacrament
- for prisoners
- for use in the congregation by the elders when the pastor is sick or on vacation

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please take a few more minutes to read the next three files: “a word about what is on this CD,” “a word about copyrights”, “ and “a word about offerings”. Again, thank you. May this *scholia resource disk 2006* be a blessing to you and to your neighbor. For more information and updates, please visit the scholia website: www.scholia.net

May God the Holy Spirit, through His Word of the Gospel, grant us the faith to remain steadfast in the truth and the courage to declare that Jesus is *our* Redeemer. Then together with all the others in the Diaspora, we remember one another in our prayers and join together throughout the world and pray the Lord’s Prayer, beginning with . . . *Our Father*.

Therefore, *Dear Redeemed*, may the LORD our God bestow His grace, mercy and peace upon us, that we would remain *steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of all grace, Who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus - after you have suffered a while - perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen (1 Peter 5:9-11)*.

The peace of the Lord be with you always,



Rev. Michael L. McCoy