

Third Sunday After Easter 22 April 2018

“Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned to joy.” Jn. 16:20

In this time after Easter the Church prepares us for Jesus’ Ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. **“Pentecost, like Christmas and Easter, is a milestone in the liturgical cycle, but one which has no fixed penitential preparation, such as Advent and Lent. The wisdom of the Church has made up for this in the liturgy of these Sundays after Easter.”** *The Preacher’s Encyclopaedia: Lent and Eastertide*, p. 556 We see how Christ himself prepares us for Pentecost in today’s Gospel (Jn.16:16-22), which takes place at the Last Supper and is Jesus’ last will and testament to His apostles. He says, ***“A little while and you shall see me no longer; and again a little while and you shall see me, because I go to the Father”*** (Jn. 16: 16). Uncomprehending, the Apostles ask: ***“What is this little while of which he speaks? We do not know what he is saying.”*** Jn. 16:18. It will only become clear after His Resurrection and Ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. They will ***“weep and lament”*** and ***“the world will rejoice”*** over His death, but then their ***“sorrow shall be turned to joy”*** (Jn.16:20) at His Resurrection and Ascension into heaven. In today’s Epistle (I Pet. 2:11-19), St. Peter, instructs us to live our lives on earth as strangers and pilgrims because we are destined for heaven where we will be filled with joy: ***“Beloved, I exhort you as strangers and pilgrims to abstain from carnal desires which war against the soul.”*** I Pt. 2:11

The Coming of the Holy Spirit and Eternal Life

The Liturgical prayers and the epistle outline what is required for the Christian to prepare for the coming of the Holy Spirit. **“The Collect sums it up. In it the Church reminds us of the sublimity of the Christian vocation and of the high degree of sanctity required of us who profess the name of Christ, while the Secret reminds us of one of the most important effects of Holy Communion, which extinguishes within us all worldly desires and inflames the heart with a love of heavenly things, a longing for the true joys of heaven.”** Ibid., p.556 In the Postcommunion prayer, we pray again for help in our pilgrimage on earth to heaven.”: **“May the**

Sacraments which we have received, we beseech Thee, O Lord, renew us with spiritual refreshment and defend us with bodily help...” While St. Peter in today’s Epistle admonishes the faithful to live exemplary lives so that they will win over the pagans, he also teaches them that the underlying reason for living good lives is because it is necessary to obey legitimate authority in order to gain eternal life: ***“Behave yourselves honourably among the pagans; that, whereas they slander you as evildoers, they may, through observing you, by reason of your good works glorify God in the day of visitation.”*** I Pt.2:12

“I will see you again...”

Venerable Bede tells us: **“These words of the Lord apply to all the faithful, who strive amid tears and pain of this present life to reach eternal joy. With good reason they lament and weep with sorrow in this present life, for they are not able to see him whom they love. They know that, as long as they are in this mortal body, wanderers from their true country, they must be, and form their own people. They doubt not that it is through hard work and struggle that they must reach their crown. Their sorrow shall be turned to joy when, once the contest of this life is ended, they receive the reward of eternal life of which the Psalmist sings: ‘They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.’** Ps. 125:5

No Joy for the Wicked

“But while the faithful weep the world rejoices; for rightly it is only in this present life that the worldlings will have any joy at all, those who place no hope in the joys of another life or who are without hope that they can attain them. This can be understood especially of the persecutors of the Christian faith; for having tormented and slain the martyrs, they rejoiced that they had conquered. But not for long, because while the martyrs were crowned in secret, these others suffered eternal punishment both for their unbelief and for their murders. To these it was said by the mouth of the prophets: ‘Behold my servants shall rejoice, while you shall be confounded; Behold my servants shall praise for joyfulness of the heart, and you shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for grief of spirit.’ Is. 65:14

Our Birth to Eternal Life

“She remembers no more, he says, the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the

world. As the woman rejoices because a man-child is born into the world, so the Church is filled with exultation at the birth of the Christian peoples into life eternal; because of whose birth she now grieves and is in labour, as a woman who gives birth in this present life. Nor should it seem strange to anyone that he is said to be born who leaves this present life. For just as he is said to be born who comes from his mother's womb into light, so also may he truly be said to be born who is delivered of the bonds of the flesh and lifted up to life eternal. For this reason it is the custom of the Church to call those days on which the death of the martyrs and saints of the Church is commemorated their birth or *Natalitia*.

Crowned as Victors by Christ

“When he says, ‘I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice,’ he meant: I will see you; I will snatch you from the jaws of your enemies; I will crown you as victors; I will prove to you that I was ever with you as you fought, like a witness. For when would he not see his own in the midst of their trials, since he has promised that he will be with them always, even to the end of the world? When the faithful died in the midst of their tortures their adversaries thought that they were without aid, saying; ‘Where is their God?’ One such as these, surrounded with torments may well cry out: ‘Behold, O Lord, my afflictions; because the enemy is exalted’ (Lam. 1:9), which means to say: ‘Since the enemy who torments me raises his hand against the lowly ones of thine in pride, sustain us by thy help, O Triumphant Creator; prove to us that thou has seen our struggles when our enemies are driven off and defeated, and that those struggles are pleasing to thee....’

The Lord will see us again

“If then, brethren, we are afflicted by salutary sufferings... if with due sorrow we weep for our own sins and for the miseries of our neighbours, the Lord will see us again, that is, he will show himself to us in the future who once deigned to see us and bestow on us the knowledge of his faith. He will see us that he may crown us who once saw us that he might call us. He will see us and our heart will rejoice, and our joy no man shall take from us; for this is the sole reward of those who suffer for God's sake, to rejoice forever in his sight.” *The Preacher's Encyclopaedia*, p. 565-66

Addenda

“Many Marriages are not of God and they do not please Him”

BY FR. REGIS SCANLON, OFMCAAP

“...The warning (on marriage) was meant for us today. Today, we see Our Lady's warnings acted out all around us. Statistics show contempt for marriage, and widespread divorce. Adultery and fornication are common. While ‘sodomy’ has been around since antiquity, in 1917 the idea of legal ‘homosexual marriage’—especially on a worldwide scale—would have been inconceivable. Similarly, while abortion has played a sad role throughout human history, except for some brutal pagan cultures, abortion was certainly not glorified by societies, and protected by governments, as a ‘legal right’ in 1917. Today, it is protected, even in traditional Catholic countries, which has led to the horrifying number of 1.5 billion babies murdered worldwide since 1980. And to think that after the flood, God said to Noah: ‘from man in regard to his fellow man, I will demand an accounting for human life.’ (Gen. 9:5).

“And consider the sacrileges against Our Lord in Holy Communion. In 1917, I doubt you could find a practicing Catholic, in those days, who would not be horrified to hear that a Catholic was regularly receiving Communion despite being divorced and remarried, or practicing fornication, adultery, or acts of homosexuality.

“Today, all these actions are being overlooked, shrugged off, or hushed up, and not just by ordinary Catholics in the pews, but by many clergy and leaders of the Church! It is as if the Church is going in the opposite direction from what the Angel of Fatima directed.

“Who can deny that, today, the Church seems to be encouraging sacrilegious communions? A majority of German Bishops want the divorced and invalidly remarried to be able to receive Communion, even without an annulment, and without practicing complete continence.¹⁵ Similar thoughts are emerging in other nations, such as in the United States. Some bishops in these countries are promoting sacrileges (perhaps unknowingly) by interpreting the papal document, *Amoris Laetitia*, as if it gives permission for invalidly married couples, living in objective adultery, to receive Communion through the so-called ‘internal form solution’ in confession.¹⁶ Others even go so far as to argue for *open communion*, defying the Church's Canon 915, which requires ministers to refuse

people Communion who are obstinately, and publicly, living in objective sin.¹⁷ Even the Vatican's head of the department of Marriage and Family Life appears to say that, in some cases, people living in invalid marriages may be able to receive Communion without living as brother and sister.¹⁸

"It appears that a number of bishops think that, if people do not believe, or do not know, that they are living in adultery, then they are free to receive Holy Communion, because there is no evil act and, therefore, no sacrilege. The truth is, that while a person may be free of sin because of their ignorance, the act itself remains an intrinsically evil act. *The act itself still offends God!* The Church clearly teaches that: It is, therefore, an error to judge the morality of human acts by considering only the intention that inspires them, or the circumstances (environment, social pressure, duress or emergency, etc) which supply their context.

"Furthermore, the Church teaches that: ...there are acts, which in themselves, independently of their circumstances and intentions, are always gravely illicit by reason of their object; such as blasphemy, murder and adultery. One may never do evil so that good may result from it.¹⁹ And when objectively evil acts are combined with the reception of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in Holy Communion, that is *always* a sacrilege.²⁰ It brings great harm to the Church, and invites a just punishment from God.

"It is a mystery, and a sign of our troubled times, that this harmful teaching has not been corrected. It is a blow to authentic Church teaching, and it ignores the truth that the Scriptures, and St. Paul, cannot be in error. The joining of adultery with Holy Communion is fanning the flames of God's "wrath" upon the Church, and the world. Surely, this is why there is so much confusion and disharmony in the Church among her leaders, and why the world is afflicted with escalating immorality, strife, violence, bloodshed, and war today.

"Oct. 13, 1917 was probably Satan's choice. Therefore, given the rampant spread of evil and sacrilege in the world since 1917, it is not beyond the realm of possibility—and, in fact, is likely to be true—that Satan chose to begin his 100-year war on the Church on Oct. 13, 1917. Perhaps, that date has satanic significance because it marks the 33rd year since Leo XIII had his vision/locution.

Perhaps, Satan wanted to mock Our Lord's 33 years on earth? It is not ours to know, but we can speculate.

"Did Our Lady intervene in this satanic plan by asking and receiving permission from God, the Father, to warn the world? And did she do so through her apparitions and messages to the children of Fatima on Oct. 13, 1917? I believe the answer to these questions is "yes."

"If so, that means that Oct. 13, 2017 will mark the end of the 100-year reign of Satan. Therefore, that day, which will also mark the 100th anniversary of the miracle of the sun at Fatima, will be important as a great Marian anniversary, and, perhaps, as a day of warning for the world. Again, there is so much we are not permitted to know, except that we can observe the state of our world, and we know that as of now, it has not repented of these sins of the flesh, or of sacrilegious communions. Instead, everything is growing worse, and at an accelerated rate.

So what is to be done?

"The Church must revisit these urgent messages from Pope Leo XIII, and at Fatima, and act on the warnings. Listen to the words of the future St. John Paul II, then Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, who spoke in 1976 at the Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia: 'We are now standing in the face of the greatest historical confrontation humanity has ever experienced. I do not think that the wide circle of the American Society, or the whole wide circle of the Christian Community, realize this fully. We are now facing the final confrontation between the Church and the anti-church, between the gospel and the anti-gospel, between Christ and the Antichrist. The confrontation lies within the plans of Divine Providence. It is, therefore, in God's Plan, and it must be a trial which the Church must take up, and face courageously.'²¹..."

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