

Sunday January 15, 2023

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

- ***From the archives of Msgr. John J. Gilchrist***
January 14, 1995

We have passed through the holy season of Advent when we remembered the time of waiting for the Messiah's birth. Then we celebrated the glory of the Christmas Season which commemorated the birth of the Savior, the Epiphany, and the Baptism of the Lord Jesus.

Now we are back into the "Ordinary Time" of the Church Year. Just as we live our daily lives which are interspersed with special days of celebration and times of difficulties, so too, the Church lives through the year in the same way. We will have those days when we celebrate with joy the events in the life of Christ and His Church. We will have times when we remember the "hard times" that Jesus and His Church endured through the years.

In today's readings we find the prophet Isaiah speaking to Israel, the servant of the Lord. If Israel serves the Lord faithfully, glory will come upon the land. They are encouraged to look forward to the future for the Lord will reward them. Paul, in the letter to the Corinthians, reminds the early Christians that Christ Jesus has called them to be a holy people. Their example will be the guiding force to bring others to the Lord.

In the gospel account we have heard the apostle John speaking of John the Baptizer. In Saint John the Baptist we have an example of a man of deep humility and great strength. When Jesus appeared at the Jordan River, the mission of John began to draw to a close. "Now I have seen for myself and have testified, 'This is God's chosen One.'" John says of Jesus at another time, "He must increase, and I must decrease." John was a man of enormous faith. He recognized his role and was content with it. There was no desire to hold on to those men and women who had become his own followers when he became aware that Jesus was now to "take over" on the stage of salvation history.

In our own day and age, we need the witness of people like Isaiah and John the Baptist for they call us forth to examine our own lives and then come to a resolution about our role in salvation history. How many today can give over control of their lives to the Lord and then trust completely that what is best for them will happen? When we put such power in the hands of God it can be a pretty scary leap of faith. Human beings have the tendency to believe that they know what is best for themselves, that their destinies are completely controlled by themselves. Therein lies the trouble. Only people of great strength and courage can place their complete trust in God. And, surprisingly, those are the people who find true happiness for they discover that the Lord loves them so much more than they love themselves – that "all things work together unto good for

those who love god.” Such persons find that true joy and happiness invades their lives for God is in control.

常年期第二主日 (1/15/2023)

— 摘自 John J. Gilchrist 蒙席案卷, 1995 年 1 月 14 日

在纪念等待默西亚来临的日子里我们度过了将临期。接下来是庆祝救赎主诞生的圣诞节和圣诞期, 然后是接踵而至的主显节和主受洗节。

现在我们回到了教会礼仪年的常年期。正如我们的日常生活与特别的庆日穿插在一起一样, 有时还要经历一些困难的时刻, 教会的礼仪年也是如此。我们也记得耶稣和祂的教会在那些年头也曾经有过艰难的时刻。

在今天的读经中依撒意亚先知告诉上主的仆人以色列, 如果以色列人忠信地服从天主, 那上主的荣耀将降临在那片土地上。上主鼓励他们展望未来, 他们会得到赏报。圣保禄宗徒在给格林多人的信中提醒那些早期的基督徒们: 耶稣基督召叫他们成为受祝圣的人。他们要成为典范, 把其他人带到主前。

在若望福音中, 我们看到洗者圣若翰是一个谦卑, 充满力量的人。当耶稣出现在约旦河岸时, 也是洗者若翰的使命即将完成的时刻: 【我看见了, 我便作证: 他就是天主子。】在另一个场合他说: 【他应该兴盛, 我欲应该衰

微。】洗者若翰是一个极具信仰的人。他认识到也非常满意他的角色。当他意识到耶稣将接替他而成为救赎史上的舞台中心时, 他没有任何欲望去抓着他自己的门徒不放。

在我们的时代, 我们需要依撒意亚先知和洗者圣若翰这样的见证, 来号召我们反省自己的生活并在救赎史上找到自己的角色。我们有多少人能把自己的生命完全交托在天主的手上并完全相信这是对他们最好的? 当人们真把自己完全交托给上主时, 那可是信仰上的飞跃。人们有一种倾向, 即总是认为他们知道什么是为他们最好的, 他们的命运完全掌控在他们自己的手中。这就奠定了日后的麻烦。只有那些极具力量和勇气的人才会完全信任上主, 一切交托给上主。同样让人惊讶的是, 这些信赖上主的人找到了真正的欢乐, 因为他们发现天主爱他们超过他们爱自己 - 对热爱上主的人来说“所有的事情都会变得美好”。这样的人会发现当天主掌控他们的生命时, 真正的喜乐会油然而生。

2023 年 1 月 15 日常年期第二主日弥撒福音反思 (若 1:29-34) - 赵必成神父

天主的羔羊对我们基督徒有什么意义?

“天主的羔羊”概括了耶稣自我交付的爱。首先, 天主在耶稣降生成人时为人类自我交付, 这爱在耶稣的十字架事件达到顶峰, 正如若 3:16 所指出: “天主竟这样爱了世界, 甚至赐下了自己的独生子, 使凡信他的人不至丧亡, 反而获得永生。”最重要的, 这是“天主的”羔羊, 他要除去世人的罪过;

根据圣经，只有天主才有权柄除免或宽恕罪过。

希腊分词“除免”(airōn) 表示耶稣除去罪过以及罪的惩罚，或解释为天主既不加罪也不惩罚。换言之，耶稣作为天主的羔羊，除免世人罪过，顶峰就在十字架上宽恕一切钉死他的罪人；他就是天主派遣来与罪人修和的那一位。

为什么若翰使用“羔羊”一词来介绍耶稣？耶稣是羔羊，但他不是供奉的祭品，因为他是“天主的”，他就是天主；他不需要为自己而向自己牺牲；因此，耶稣作为天主的羔羊，远远超越犹太人为了获得天主赦免而祭献牺牲，他不是民间信仰的一个祭品，而是天主通过他进入人类历史的自我交付的爱，在耶稣内与人修和。

当在弥撒诵念或咏唱“羔羊颂”时，信徒以最深刻的理解，宣告耶稣是天主的羔羊，这就是他降生成人的身份。借着耶稣自我交付的爱，信众相信并确认，他来是重整被罪恶毁坏得支离破碎的世界，就是以他对罪人的宽恕。

就像天主的羔羊一样，基督徒对天主的忠实回应，是重建世界破碎的生命，通过耶稣让所有罪人与慈悲天主修和。藉着天主羔羊的爱，基督徒被召叫去医治所有失去生存希望、离开天主正义以及心灵破碎的人；换言之，通过天主羔羊耶稣的生死和复活，基督徒被召叫去传扬天主永恒的爱，提醒世界，这才是人生最高与最终的目标。

人们经常给身边人推荐好的餐馆或购物中心，为什么没有同样的热情邀请和鼓励他们来加入教会？如果基督徒只顾自己念经，不管传扬福音，就无法见证天主在耶稣内自我交付的爱；让教会学习洗者若翰，如他说：“我看见了，我便作证：他就是天主子。”