

复活期第四主日 (4/30/2023)

- 摘自 John J. Gilchrist 蒙席案卷, 1996 年 4 月 28 日

今天的读经一宗徒大事录中, 我们听到伯多禄宗徒在第一个五旬节对众人宣讲。我们可以清楚地看到由圣神德能所带来的信德和勇气在伯多禄及宗徒身上彰显。毫无疑问耶稣的教导开始由他的使徒和门徒们传承。他们承秉着耶稣对他们的信托, 在传耶稣的信息时增加了新的任务。

答唱咏与福音关联密切。【上主是我的牧者, 我实在一无所缺。】圣咏提醒我们当我们完全信靠上主对我们的眷顾时, 天主在提供我们的所需中从不会缺席。但也并非如圣咏所吟那样貌似简单。完全信靠上主的信德不是一蹴而就, 跳跃式的。我们是如此地习惯靠自己, 并不正确地假设我们可以完全掌控发生在我们生活中的一切。当然, 我们必须尽力提供我们所需, 但努力后, 我们要承认天主在我们生活中的“掌舵”。

福音告诉我们耶稣是给予生命的牧羊人。耶稣时代的民众及当下的牧羊人与今天的福音比喻完全有关联。福音中耶稣提到牧羊人及他自己的羊群数次。耶稣是天主牧场的门。他谈及那些假冒默西亚的人时说:【羊决不跟随陌生人, 反而逃避他, 因为羊不认得陌生人的声音。】基督在此用逃避来比喻我们要逃离罪的危险, 要获得属灵生命的滋养(面饼, 水和生命之光)。他许诺给我们的生命是如此丰盛, 超越了我们测量的能力。

耶稣成全了旧约中天主的承诺: 天主自己要来牧放祂的羊群。这许诺不仅在犹太人那里得到成全, 也在外邦人中得到承行: 欢迎并承认耶稣是天主草场的牧羊人。天主的羊群是由万邦, 万民组成。

我们反思今天的读经, 结论就是我们的上主天主用祂无限的爱关怀我们每一个人。如果我们能够完全理解耶稣降生成人, 他的生命和圣死的奥迹, 我们就能够明白天主对我们无条件的爱。天主会向我们要什么? 实际上一点儿也不多: 像上主的儿女那样, 按照耶稣的教导生活, 承认上主是宇宙万物的主-而不是我们。只有这样, 我们不仅能拥有一个来世幸福的永恒生命, 在现世也能有一个持久平安及喜乐的生活。

The Fourth Sunday of Easter April 30, 2023

- *From the archives of Msgr. John J. Gilchrist April 28, 1996*

In the first reading today, which is a continuation of the Acts of the Apostles, we hear Peter addressing the crowds of people on the first Pentecost. The power of the Holy Spirit is clearly seen in the strength of faith and courage that Saint Peter and the other apostles manifested. There was no doubt that the teachings of Jesus Christ had been placed in capable hands as the apostles and disciples began to grow in their new role as bearers of the message that had been entrusted to them by the Lord Jesus Himself.

The responsorial psalm and the gospel are closely linked. “The Lord is my Shepherd there is nothing I shall want.” The psalm serves as a reminder that the Lord will never fail to provide for us if we place out trust and confidence in His Divine Providence. This is not as simple as it seems. It is very difficult to make a leap of faith that places complete trust in God. We are too used to providing for ourselves and assuming, incorrectly, that we are in total control of everything that happens in our lives. Yes, we must do all in our power to provide for our own needs, but when that has been done, we recognize that God is “The Power” in all of our lives.

The gospel tells us that Jesus is the Shepherd who gives His life. The people in Jesus time, as the shepherds today, would relate completely to this parable. It is true, strikingly true to life. The gatekeeper is apparently someone who is paid by a number of shepherds to guard the sheep in one fold, since Jesus refers to several shepherds by inference and repeats His own sheep several times. Christ is the gate into God’s fold. He refers to those who pretend to be Messiahs when he says “They (the sheep) will not follow a stranger; such a one they will flee, because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice” Christ provides escape from the perils of sin, freedom, and the spiritual sustenance (bread, water, and light of life). The Life that He promises will be abundant, beyond ability to measure.

Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises that God Himself will come to shepherd His people. Not only will the promises be fulfilled for the Jewish people, but the Gentiles, the non -Jews, will be welcomed by Jesus into the

fold of God’s sheepfold. The flock of God will be comprised of peoples of all nations.

As we reflect upon the readings today, we can only come to the conclusion that the Lord God cares for each of us with an overwhelming love. If we could fully comprehend the enormity of the incarnation, birth, life and death of Jesus Christ, we would begin to understand how great and unconditionally God loves us. And what does God ask of us? Not very much at all. To live in a manner that is consistent with being a child of God. To embrace as a way of life the teachings of His Son Jesus Christ, to recognize that God is the Master of the Universe – not us. If we could follow this way of life we would find not only eternal happiness after this life, but the enormous peace and joy in this life as well.