

May 5, 2013

Sixth Sunday of Easter – Life Sunday

Liturgical Theme: Each family is a source of life and a school for life essential to the mission of the Christian community, and thus key to the Church's call for a new evangelization.

Bulletin Insert

"Life is the first good received from God and is fundamental to all others; to guarantee the right to life for all and in an equal manner for all is the duty upon which the future of humanity depends." – *Pope Benedict XVI in address to Pontifical Academy for Life, February 24, 2007.*

General Intercessions

Celebrant: Our Lord commands us not to be distressed or fearful. With confidence, we bring our needs to Him.

Lector:

- For Pope Francis, Archbishop Smith, auxiliary Bishop Greg, and all the clergy; that they may be good and faithful shepherds lovingly guiding the Church, we pray to the Lord...
- For all who live in war-torn countries; that they may grow up in knowing love, peace and justice, we pray to the Lord...
- For all the newly baptized; that they may continue to grow in Christ, supported by their parish communities, we pray to the Lord...
- For all the elderly; that they may be supported and cared for by their friends and families, and protected from euthanasia and assisted suicide, we pray to the Lord...
- For the sick, the dying, the poor, the oppressed, and the unborn; that our faith in Christ may lead us to support and protect His most vulnerable people, we pray to the Lord...
- For all who counsel parents who have lost children to abortion: that God would reward them for their witness to His Divine Mercy, strengthen them, and grant them the words of wisdom to lead lost souls home to him, we pray to the Lord...
- For all married couples who are struggling with infertility, that the Lord grant them peace as they hope for the gift of a child, we pray to the Lord...

Celebrant: Father, you have made your dwelling with us. Hear our prayers, fulfill our needs, and grant us your salvation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Homily Notes (from Zenit.org)

ROME, MAY 11, 2007 (Zenit.org).- Here is a translation of a commentary by the Pontifical Household preacher, Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa, on the readings from this Sunday's liturgy.

www.zenit.org/en/articles/father-cantalamessa-on-peace

My Peace I Give to You

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 15:1-2,22-29; Revelations 21:10-14, 22-23; John 14:23-29

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you" (John 14:27). What peace does Jesus speak of in this Gospel passage? He is not talking about an external peace that would consist in an absence of wars and conflicts between different people or nations. He speaks of that peace on other occasions, for example, when he says: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God."

In today's Gospel passage he speaks of another peace, an interior peace of the heart, of the person with himself and with God. This much is clear from what Jesus immediately adds in this passage from John: "Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." This is the most fundamental peace. Without this peace, no other peace can exist. A billion drops of dirty water do not make a clean ocean and a billion troubled hearts do not make up a human race at peace.

The word that Jesus uses is "shalom." The Jews greeted each other with this word and still do; Jesus himself greeted the disciples with it on Easter evening and he orders the disciples to greet people in the same way: "In whatever house you enter say first, 'Peace be to this house'" (Luke 10:5-6).

To understand the meaning of the peace that Christ gives we have to look to the Bible. In the Bible "shalom" says more than simple absence of war and disorder. It positively indicates well-being, rest, certainty, success, glory. The Scriptures speak indeed of "the peace of God" (Philippians 4:7) and of the "God of peace" (Romans 15:32). Peace does not mean only what God gives but also what God is. In one of her hymns the Church calls the Trinity "ocean of peace."

This tells us that the peace of heart that we all desire can never be totally and stably possessed without God, outside of him. In the "Divine Comedy" Dante Alighieri synthesized all of this in that verse that many consider the most beautiful in this work: "In his will is our peace."

Jesus makes us understand what is opposed to this peace -- worry, anxiety, fear: "Do not let your hearts be troubled." Easy to say -- someone might object. How do we placate anxiety and disquiet, the worry that devours us all and keeps us from enjoying peace? Some people are by temperament more disposed than others to these things. If there is some danger, they blow it out of proportion, if there is some difficulty, they increase it by 100%. Everything becomes a reason for anxiety.

The Gospel does not promise a remedy for all these problems; to a certain extent they are part of our human condition, exposed as we are to forces and dangers much bigger than ourselves. But the Gospel does indicate some remedy. The chapter from which Sunday's Gospel passage is taken begins: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Have faith in God and have faith in me too" (John 14:1). Trusting in God is the remedy.

After World War II, a book was published by the title "Last Letters from Stalingrad." They were letters by German soldiers who were awaiting the final Russian assault on Stalingrad, in which all were killed. The letters went with the last plane that was able to make it out of the city. In one of the letters, found after

the end of the war, a young soldier wrote to his parents: "I am not afraid of death. My faith gives me this beautiful certainty."

Now we know what we are wishing each other at Mass at the kiss of peace. We wish each other well-being, health, good relationships with God, with ourselves and with our neighbor. In other words, we are wishing each other a heart filled with "the peace of Christ that surpasses all understanding."
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