

Exaudi

St. John 15:26—16:4

May 24th, 2020

Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC

Simpsonville, SC

St. Michael and All Angels Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC

Augusta, GA

All Saints Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC

Myrtle Beach, SC

Pastor Jerald Dulas

Whom I Shall Send to You from the Father

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Lord God, heavenly Father, we give thanks unto Thee, that through Thy Holy Spirit Thou hast appointed us to bear witness of Thy dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: We beseech Thee, inasmuch as the world cannot endure such testimony, and persecutes us in every way, grant us courage and comfort, that we may not be offended because of the cross, but continue steadfastly in Thy testimony, and be found always among those who know Thee and Thy Son, until we obtain eternal salvation through the same, Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one true God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

In the Church's year we find ourselves united to the events of the individuals in the holy Scriptures. In the Christmas season we are connected to our Lord's incarnation and birth. In the Lenten season we are connected to our Lord's suffering, crucifixion and death. In the Easter season we are connected to our Lord's resurrection from the dead. This past Thursday we celebrated the Festival of the Ascension of our Lord. We are now in the time where we are connected to the Apostles as they find themselves between our Lord's Ascension and the "promise of the Father"; the coming of the Holy Ghost on Pentecost. This is why this Sunday is called "the Sunday after the Ascension." We are in this brief ten-day season known as "Ascensiontide."

The Apostles were to wait in Jerusalem for what our Lord + Jesus called "the promise of the Father." They were to wait for the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost. For us this event has already happened. But in the Church's year we relive this event in the life of the Church. The Apostles waited in Jerusalem for the Holy Ghost on Pentecost. We also find ourselves waiting. The ancient name for this Sunday was *Dominica Expectationis*; The Lord's Day of Expectation. We are in the period of expectation. We are in the period of waiting. For what do we wait?

The Apostles waited for the coming of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost has already come among us. He is here working through the means of grace to create and sustain faith and life in all who believe on the Lord + Jesus Christ, and trust in His atonement for the sins of the whole world on the tree of the holy cross. We do not need to wait for the Holy Ghost to come like the Apostles did during this ten-day period. Therefore, for what do we wait? We are waiting for the consummation of the world; for the day when our Lord + Jesus will call us into our eternal home in Heaven. We wait for the day when sin will no longer torment us in our conscience and lives daily. We wait for the day when we will join with all of the saints who have died in the faith in Heaven. We wait for the day when we will sing the eternal Liturgy

of the Lamb in His Kingdom with all the saints and angels; the same Liturgy which we practice every Lord's Day; the same Liturgy we sing today in this place.

Well, what are we to be doing while we wait? That is given to us in the other ancient name for this Sunday: *Exaudi*. It comes from the first line of the Introit—as is the case with most of the names for Sundays of the Church's year. "Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice." *Exaudi* means, to hear." This is not only the Sunday of expectation—of waiting—but also the Sunday of hearing. Last Sunday was the Sunday of Praying. We were to take our petitions to the Lord God for all of our spiritual and physical needs. Now we listen to His response. Now we hear His Word preached into our ears. Now He gives us answer through His holy Word.

And He says through the words of the Apostle and Evangelist St. John in today's Gospel reading that He will send to the Church the Helper. He will send the Helper to us from the Father. The Holy Ghost will proceed from the Father, and the Son, to be our Helper; our Comforter; our Advocate. The Greek word that is used is "Paraclete." What is a "Paraclete?" In the Greek world this was a legal term. Today we would use the term "lawyer," but a "Paraclete" was so much more than the lawyers of today. A "Paraclete" was one who stood by the side of the accused and offered comfort to the one who was accused. This comfort would often take the form of interceding and pleading on behalf of the accused to the judge.

What this means for us is that wherever the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, is we have an advocate against the Accuser; we have Someone Who pleads on our behalf to the Judge. Think about that! We are well aware of the fact that our Lord + Jesus intercedes on our behalf in Heaven to the heavenly Father for us, showing Him His hands, feet and side as an eternal testimony that our sins have been paid for by His own innocent shed Blood on the tree of the holy cross. But we also have the Holy Ghost Who pleads our case here on Earth; refuting the accusations of our accusers—the devil, the world, and even our own sinful flesh.

The devil accuses us with our past sins; bringing to our minds all the times where we embarrassed ourselves with our sinful thoughts, words and actions. "Remember the time when you did that stupid thing? You should you'll probably be doing it again," the devil will tell our conscience. He leads us into shame and despair with our past sins. The world also uses our past sins to shame us in front of the world. The world points out to us how little we exhibit the behaviors of a "good Christian." The world likes to show us how little we have shown the rest of the world how a Christian should live their life. The world will say, "Remember when you were angry and cursed out all those people? You were not being a very good Christian witness." The world also tries to lead us into shame and despair over what we have done.

And after the devil and the world have been beating on our conscience with unrelenting harshness, then our own flesh takes its turn. It reminds us of all the sinful thoughts that haunt our souls; the type of sins that we would be too ashamed to share with our very own spouses, or closest friends. Our sinful flesh reminds us just how sick, twisted and perverse we truly are. It reminds us that we are truly poor, miserable, abject sinners. Of course, the purpose of these attacks by the devil, the world and our sinful flesh is to so lead us into shame and despair that we are led to believe that there is no hope for us at all.

It is easy for our attackers at this point to deceive us into the other ditch; the ditch of pride. It is easy for us at this point to go looking for salvation in all the wrong sources. We say, "Well, maybe our sins are not that bad. We are not really that bad of a person. At least we are not as bad as those other people. Look at all the good things that I have done." And similar things we say to deceive ourselves. We are easily led into the sin of pride. The sin that goes looking into our good works for something we can hang our hat of salvation upon. The sin of pride is just another form of false idolatry. It is the false

idol of trusting in our good reputation, or good behavior. This is what our accusers—the devil, the world and our sinful flesh—want us to be trusting in, for if we are despairing over our sins, or trusting in our works, then we are not trusting in the works and merits of the Christ, our Lord + Jesus.

This is why our Lord + Jesus sent to us His Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost pleads on our behalf here on this Earth. He pleads with our conscience through the Word of God to lead us to the Christ. The Holy Ghost is here on Earth with us enlightening our eyes to see that our salvation is not found in us, but only in the Son of the heavenly Father—Who is also pleading our case to the Father in Heaven. Therefore, we have an Advocate here on Earth in the Holy Ghost, and we have an Advocate in Heaven in the Lord + Jesus Christ. What that tells me is that the Triune Lord God is eternally on our side. Our Triune Lord God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—desire our eternal salvation. They work tirelessly both here on Earth and in Heaven to open our ears to hear and believe what they have to say. They say that our salvation was accomplished on the tree of the holy cross through the innocent suffering and death of our beloved Lord + Jesus.

The Holy Ghost works through the means of grace; the Word and the Sacraments that we have gathered around here today. All of these means point to the sacrifice of the Son on our behalf. They give us something true and real in which we can cling to in faith. They take us out of ourselves and our thoughts about what sins we have committed, and bring us to the font, and pulpit, and the altar where the works of our Lord + Jesus are expounded and delivered to us.

The works and merits of the Christ are revealed through the work of our Comforter and Helper, the Holy Ghost. He is our Advocate here on Earth. He rescues us from the despair and shame that our accusers would have us drown in. He lifts us up and shows us that our home is in Heaven; our citizenship is in Heaven. He shows us through the Word of God that our sins have been paid for by the Christ, so that no accusation of the devil, the world, or our flesh, has any power anymore whatsoever. We rest securely in the arms of mother Church. We rest securely in the bosom of our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Our sins are no longer counted toward us, for the Holy Ghost fill us with faith to believe that our sins have been atoned for by the Christ.

This is the help and comfort that the Paraclete provides for us, and all who have received the gift of faith from Him. This is the help and comfort that sustains us in this time of expectation; in this time of waiting. As we wait for our Lord's return on the Last Day; as we wait for the day when we will be called to our eternal home in Heaven, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, Helper, and Paraclete is sustaining and preserving us in the Word of the Lord + Jesus, the Christ. This Word proclaims the works and merits that our Lord + Jesus has done for us. He has shed His innocent Blood, and redeemed us from sin, death and the power of the devil. Therefore, let us open our ears and hear this wonderful Gospel, and believe that by it our sins are forgiven, both here on Earth, and before the throne of the Lord God in Heaven. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, Who hast given us commandment to pray for the gift of the Holy Ghost, most heartily we beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ, our Advocate, to grant us Thy Holy Spirit, that He may quicken our hearts by Thy saving Word, and lead us into all truth, that He may guide, instruct, enlighten, govern, comfort, and sanctify us unto everlasting life; through the same, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!