

Jubilate  
St. John 16:16-23a  
May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020  
Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## Your Sorrow Will Be Turned into Joy

*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, Who of Thy fatherly goodness dost suffer Thy children to come under Thy chastening rod here on Earth, that we may be like unto Thine Only-Begotten Son in suffering and hereafter in glory: We beseech Thee, comfort us in temptations and afflictions by Thy Holy Spirit, that we may not fall into despair, but that we may continually trust in Thy Son's promise, that our trials will endure but a little while, and will then be followed by eternal joy; that we thus, in patient hope, may overcome all evil, and at last 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.

We have reached the halfway point of the season of Easter. Beginning with the Propers for today, Jubilate Sunday, we hear from the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of the Evangelist and Apostle St. John the words of our Lord + Jesus Christ on the night of His betrayal, arrest, trial and crucifixion. Our Lord + Jesus in His compassion prepares His Apostles for His death by telling them what is about to happen. In a little while, they will no longer see Him. He will be beaten, mocked, spit upon, shamed and crucified. He will be buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. Then on the third day—in a little while—they will see Him again, risen from the dead.

He will appear to them in the Upper Room on the night of His resurrection. They will all be gathered together for fear of retaliation from the Jews. They will still be mourning His death; wondering what has happened to the Person they believed to be the Messiah. Things will not look more bleak for the Eleven Apostles. But then, their sorrow will be turned to joy. The Lord + Jesus will appear to them in the Upper Room, as we heard about a couple of Sundays ago, and proclaim to them "Peace." The risen Lord and Savior—the Lord + Jesus Christ—will be standing before them. They will be so filled with joy, that they will not be able to believe what their eyes are seeing. Can you imagine such joy?

Our Lord + Jesus with the words of comfort for His Apostles on the night before these events happen shows His care and concern for those entrusted to Him by the heavenly Father. He knows the grief and hardship that they will endure, and He desires to provide them with words that will provide some comfort for them in the coming hours and days. These words also supply us with comfort. They are also meant for our ears.

For our Lord's words do not only apply to His time in the grave, but to His Ascension into Heaven to sit on the right hand of God the Father judging the quick and the dead; interceding on behalf of all those who live in repentance and put their trust in the works and merits of the Christ. This is why these Gospel readings from the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of the Evangelist and Apostle St. John appear

in the Church's year during this last half of the Easter season. These words are meant to prepare us—the Church on Earth—for our Lord's Ascension celebrated by us in about a week and an half.

We can be joyful—jubilant—for Lord prepares us for the time when He will not be present with us in the same way He was with His Apostles. Next Sunday, our Lord + Jesus will begin to speak to us about the coming of the Holy Ghost, Whose arrival on Whitsunday—Pentecost—ushers in the work of the Holy Ghost; the days when faith is created and sustained by the work of the Holy Ghost through the means of grace.

The Church is prepared for both of these events—the Lord's Ascension and the coming of the Holy Ghost—beginning with today's Gospel reading. Today is called "Jubilate." It is one of the three rejoicing Sundays of the Church's year; as you have heard me say often. These rejoicing Sunday mark the halfway points of their respective seasons. They provide a turning point in the season. The Church now turns from the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord to our Lord's Ascension and the coming of the Holy Ghost on Whitsunday. In doing this the Church uses the words of our Lord + Jesus from these chapters of St. John to prepare us for what is coming.

The Apostles were about to endure great suffering. Surely, they would be facing great grief as they witness the Man they believe to be the Messiah suffer, die and be buried. They would certainly feel like their whole worldview was turned upside down. The sorrow that they felt over our Lord's death would be turned to joy when the Lord + Jesus came to them alive again. But they would face even greater trial and persecutions after the Lord's Ascension. All of them but St. John would be killed for their witness and testimony. They would endure great hardships at the hands of the world. The devil would use the hatred of the world to inflict great pain upon the Apostles. But they would endure and receive the crown of eternal life. Their life of sorrow would be turned into an eternal life of eternal joy and jubilation in Heaven.

The Church continues to endure suffering for the sake of the Name of the Lord + Jesus Christ. There are many who still mock the Church; paint our teachings as useless babble—the cravings of a weak mind. The foolishness of the world is the wisdom of the Lord God. For salvation is found only in the Church. Through the preached Word and the blessed Sacraments, our Lord + Jesus sustains our faith through His Holy Ghost. He draws us closer to Him.

The Church as a whole certainly suffering and persecution, but we as individual Christians also endure suffering and shame. We suffer even as our Lord + Jesus suffered and died on our behalf. His followers endure the same cross that He endured. Our persecution—our sadness—is caused by our enemies: the devil, the world and our sinful flesh. The devil uses the world and our sinful flesh to drive us either into pride—the belief that our sins are not that great of a problem—or the devil drives us into despair—the belief that our sins are too great for our Lord's forgiveness and grace.

We experience pride whenever believe that our sins are less than any other person's sins. If we have ever said, "well, at least I am not like that person" we have fallen into pride. The devil has misled us away from the Lord + Jesus by making us think that we have something inside of us that makes us less sinful than other people. We have been led away from the Lord + Jesus because we have been led to believe that our good works are somehow worthy enough to appease the Lord God's wrath. The wrath of the heavenly Father is only appeased by the sacrifice of the Lord + Jesus on the tree of the holy cross, and when we begin to claim our salvation based on our works and deeds, we have claimed the work of the Christ does not apply to those good deeds that we believe are worthy.

The world loves to push us into pride; it loves for us to praise our good deeds for the world is always praising its good deeds. One thing this pandemic has done is created a whole new form of works-righteousness. The "stay at home" orders have created a new way for people to feel good about

themselves and to cut down the actions of their fellowman. Those that think that people should stay home make themselves out to be better citizens because they stay home. The people that think that things should be opened up make themselves out to be better people because they are resisting the oppression of the previous individuals and the government. Love for one's neighbor is forgotten on both sides.

But this is what the world does, it drives us to believe that our sins are less than our neighbor's sins. And our sinful flesh eats it up. Our sinful flesh loves to be in the right; loves to diminish our own sins while exalting the sins of others. Our sinful flesh has a hard time admitting it is wrong, especially when we are filled with pride and self-righteousness.

And if the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh cannot deceive us with pride. They crush us with despair over our sinfulness. The world is all too ready to point out how much of a poor, miserable sinner we are. Our sinful flesh is ready to point out to us how much we sin, and how little we obey God's Law, study His Word, pray to Him. We fail miserably daily and often in doing what our Lord God would have us do. We fail miserably daily and often in doing the things our Lord God would not have us do. The devil, the world and our sinful flesh is all too ready to be there and crush us under the weight of our own sin, and deliver us into despair.

This is why our Lord + Jesus on the night of His betrayal offers comforting words to His Apostles, for He knew the hardships they would endure, both outwardly from the devil and the world, and inwardly from their own sinful flesh. These comforting words of our Lord + Jesus are also for us. We experience much sorrow and hardship in this life. Our enemies are relentless attackers. The Lord + Jesus may appear at times to have gone away from us and left us alone. It is certainly easy for us to forget that the risen and ascended Lord + Jesus is still with us; that He sits on the right hand of the Father in Heaven for us. Especially when we withdraw ourselves from our weapons of the Word of God and the Blessed Sacraments.

We are in the "little while" when our Lord is not physically seen by us. But He has not deserted us, He is still with us in His Word and Sacraments. He has still sent His Holy Ghost to comfort us and lead us to Him. Indeed, in a little while we will come to this altar and kneel before our Lord + Jesus and receive Him in His Body and Blood through bread and wine. He will come to us with forgiveness, life and salvation and we will enjoy those gifts on our lips and tongues. We will be refreshed from the burdens of our sins, and we will be given faith to cling ever more closely to our Lord + Jesus Christ.

For this meal is a foretaste of the meal we will enjoy in Heaven. This meal is only a shadow and precursor of the glorious feast we will celebrate for all eternity in Heaven. The suffering and sorrow we endure in this life, we will be turned into eternal joy. We will be jubilant forever as we sing the eternal Liturgy of the Lamb in His Kingdom. Our life on this earth endures for a little while, but our life in Heaven will endure forever and ever. There our sorrow will be turned into joy, and we will no longer suffer pride or despair, but we will lovingly and faithfully cling to our Lord + Jesus Christ and Him alone. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### **Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Merciful God, Faithful Father, Who chastenest all whom Thou lovest, that they may not be condemned with the wicked, we beseech Thee, Thou wouldst comfort us in our afflictions with Thy Word and Holy Spirit, that by patience we may overcome the miseries of this present world, in the firm and joyful hope that Thou wilt speedily turn our sorrow into joy and glory everlasting; for the sake of Thy dear Son, 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!*