

Jubilate  
St. John 16:16-23a  
April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024  
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
St. Michael and All Angels Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Augusta, GA  
All Saints Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Pawleys Island, SC  
St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Ormond Beach, FL  
St. Bartholomew Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Fort Myers, FL  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## A Little While

*In Nomine Iesu!*

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

### **Sermon Text:**

“A little while, and ye behold Me no more; and again a little while, and ye shall see Me.’ Some of His disciples therefore said one to another, ‘What is this that He saith unto us, ‘A little while, and ye behold Me not; and again a little while, and ye shall see Me: and, “Because I go to the Father?”’ They said therefore, ‘What is this that He saith, “A little while?” We know not what He saith.’”

### **Prayer in Pulpit before 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.

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

Hallelujah! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!

My dear friends, today in the Church’s year is named “Jubilate.” This title is taken from the antiphon of the Introit: “Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands.” The Church today is to make a “joyful noise.” It is to be jubilant. It is to rejoice! This day is one of the three “rejoicing Sundays” of the Church’s year. The other two fall during Advent and Lent, Gaudete and Laetare, respectively. These are the rose Sundays in those seasons. They mark the halfway point of the season they are in. They indicate a turning point of the season. Today, Jubilate, also marks the halfway point of the season. It indicates a turning point of this season of Easter. From now until Pentecost (or Whitsunday) the Church’s focus turns to the Ascension of our Lord and the gifting of the Holy Ghost on Pentecost.

This Sunday, and the following Sundays, are taken from the Gospel of the Apostle and Evangelist St. John. Today’s Gospel pericope is from our Lord’s last night with His Apostles before His

arrest, trial, crucifixion, and death. These are the words that our Lord + Jesus speaks to His Apostles in the Upper Room as they ate the Last Supper; the night the Lord instituted His Lord's Supper. Our Lord prepares His Apostles for His death, and also prepares them for the time when He would no longer be with them physically after His Ascension. Therefore, He says to them, "A little while, and ye behold Me no more." He says the phrase, "A little while" twice in this Gospel reading from St. John. The first "little while" is referring to His crucifixion and death, the second "little while" is referring to His ascension.

So, the Lord + Jesus prepares His Apostles for the time when He would be apart from them on account of His atoning sacrifice—His death and burial—and, for the time when He would be apart from them on account of His sitting on the right hand of God the Father as the intercessor for their, and our, sins after His ascension.

The three days in the tomb were days of mourning and sorrow for the Apostles. They had lost their Lord to crucifixion and death. They hid themselves in the Upper Room for fear of the Jews. They feared what would happen to them now that their Lord was no longer with them. They not only had to mourn His death, and the loss of Him, but they also dwelt in fear that their deaths would be next. Their sorrow was turned into joy—into jubilation and rejoicing—on the third day when the Lord + Jesus had risen from the dead. He was no longer dead, but alive. He was dead for a little while, but now on the third day, He was alive again. They had mourned His death, but now their hearts rejoiced, and they had a joy which no one could take from them. For just like a woman in the travails of giving birth has pain and sorrow, after the baby is delivered, she has joy which no one can take from her. This was the first "little while" our Lord spoke about to His Apostles.

We also experience this sorrow and joy as we participate in the Church's year. Through the Lenten season we heard about our sins, our breaking of the Ten Commandments, and how on account of them we deserve nothing but the Lord God's eternal wrath and displeasure. We deserve nothing good because we are sinners. That we receive anything that is good is pure blessing of the Lord God Almighty. We only receive the good things we have by His grace and mercy toward us. The realization that we are poor, miserable sinners, leads our humble hearts into repentance.

This repentance—this sorrow over our sins—was furthered by hearing the events of Holy Week. Every day we heard of our Lord's Passion; His suffering and death to atone for the sins of the whole world. It was our sins that nailed Him to the tree of the cross. It is our sins for which He willingly suffered shame, beatings, and death. He atoned for our sins by His death on the tree of the holy cross. Hearing of His sufferings and death rightly filled our penitent hearts with sorrow and grief at our own sinfulness. But then came Easter morning and our sorrow was turned into joy. We saw the empty grave. We heard the angels who were at the tomb declare that the Lord had arisen; that He was not there.

This fills us with joy and rejoicing, for it is a reflection of our own death and resurrection. We may die, but we will be raised again from the dead on the Last Day. Our Lord's death and resurrection means that our death will be turned into an eternal resurrection from the dead, as we rejoice forever and ever with all the saints of Heaven for our Lord's sacrifice for us. In a little while our death is turned into life forever in Heaven. In a little while the death of all those who we love, who have died in the faith of the Christ, we will see alive again in Heaven when we are called from this vale of tears to our eternal home. Our sorrow will be turned into joy and rejoicing. We will have never-ending jubilation!

And this is just the first "a little while." For, our Lord not only prepares His Apostles for His departure into the grave, but He prepares them for the time in which we find ourselves now. The time between our Lord's ascension to the right hand of the Father, and the time when He will come again to judge the quick and the dead. From this Sunday forward the Church looks to our Lord's ascension. On that day the Lord promised His Apostles that He would never leave them nor forsake them. He is with us until the end of this age. We have His promise that was given to His Apostles as they ate their last

meal with Him before His trial, crucifixion, and death. That He would be apart from them for a little while; that they would not see Him for a little while, but then they would see Him.

We also have this promise. We have the promise that our Lord will not leave us nor forsake us. We have the promise that we will see Him again in all His glory. We will be with Him forever and ever. He will come again on the Last Day and take us to our eternal home in Heaven. He will deliver us from the pain and travails of this earthly life which we endure now. He will take us from this vale of tears to our eternal home in Heaven.

And until that day He does not leave us alone. He does not leave us to wallow in our bitter grief and pain over our sins. But He is here with us just as He promised. He is with us until the end of the age in His Blessed means of grace. This is why we gather together in this holy house. This is why we converse and console one another with the grace of the forgiveness of sins which our Lord and Savior has won for us on the tree of the holy cross. We gather together and comfort one another in our grief and pain with the hope of an eternal life in Heaven. But even more than that, we receive the Blessed Sacraments that our Lord and Savior has given to the Church to impart to us the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation that He procured on the tree of the holy cross.

Our Lord + Jesus is present with us here in the place, and so we come to this place to be with Him. He washes away our sins, by the remembrance of our Holy Baptism. He announces to us that our sins are forgiven in the Absolution spoken by the pastor. He preaches into our ears the declaration of our forgiveness through the preaching of the crucified and risen Savior from the pulpit. And, He feeds us with His very own Body and Blood given in bread and wine, as we remember and proclaim His death for the remission of all of our sins. This is why we gather in this place: to receive His gifts. We cannot do this from our couch. We must be here to receive from His minister the gifts that He would give to us.

For, my dear friends, we live in the time of the little while. We live in the time when we do not see our Lord + Jesus physically. We must come here to this place and be reminded as often as we can that He has not left us nor forsaken us. For through these means of grace our Lord + Jesus comes to us and heals our spiritual wounds, and carries away our sorrows by giving us joy that through Him we now have a new life. We have been rescued from our sins, and have been promised an eternal life with Him in Heaven.

Therefore, let us not forsake the gathering together in His Name to receive His gifts here in this place. And if we are physically unable to get to this holy house to receive the gifts our Lord would give us, let us call the ministers and plead with them to come and offer us the gifts of the Lord from his hand. For it is in the means of grace where we see our Lord again. It is in the means of grace where our sorrow is turned into joy. It is this joy which we celebrate today.

Let us then make a joyful noise unto our Lord and God. Let us sing the praise of His Name. For He has delivered us from sin and death, and given to us forgiveness, life, and salvation. We may walk in this valley of the shadow of death, but our Lord leads us by His Word to the gates of Heaven. There we will be led into the halls of eternal joys, and rejoice everlastingly that the Lamb of God has offered Himself on the tree of the holy cross, and has brought us out of death into life. Amen. Hallelujah! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah! In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

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

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over

the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the 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!*