

Jubilate Sunday
St. John 16:16-23a
April 26th, 2026
St. Bartholomew Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC
Fort Myers, FL
Pastor Jerald P. Dulas

Your Sorrow Shall Be Turned into Joy

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Sermon Text:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.”

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.

My dear friends, we have reached the point in the Easter season where we spend time hearing what our dear Lord + Jesus, the Christ, said to His Apostles in the Upper Room before His betrayal, arrest, and trial. Our Lord prepares His Apostles for His crucifixion and death. He prepares them for His betrayal and arrest, for His sham trial. He does this on the same night in which He instituted the Lord's Supper, the meal of His Body and Blood for us given in bread and wine. We have reached the halfway point of the Easter season, and from now until Pentecost the readings mostly go backwards. It is as if the Church is counting down to the Feast of Pentecost; as if the Church is counting down to the gifting of the Holy Ghost, our Comforter. For it is the Holy Ghost which leads us into all truth, as we will hear about in the coming Sundays.

He is the One Who comforts us in our sorrows. For it is the work of the Holy Ghost to make plain to us the words of holy Scripture. He is the One Who opens our ears and hearts to hear and receive the Word of the Lord God. He is the One Who points out to us that we have a Savior—a Redeemer from sin and death. He is the One Who points us to the Christ; to our Lord + Jesus. For in the Lord + Jesus we have forgiveness of sins and eternal life. It is knowledge of this that turns our sad hearts into hearts of joy. It is because of the work that our Lord + Jesus did on the tree of the holy cross that we can sing with mouth and heart. For we know that in Him we have life and salvation. We have life and salvation because He has paid the debt of all our sins.

He pays for all of our sins by His death upon the tree of the holy cross. It is in preparation for His suffering and death—His Passion—that our Lord + Jesus prepares His Apostles by telling them what is about to happen. They will weep and lament. Why? Because the Man Who they believed to be the Messiah would suffer and die. But He would do it patiently, without fanfare, or battle. As Martin Luther points out in the excerpt from his sermon for this Sunday, printed in the bulletin, the Apostles said they

were prepared to go with Him to prison and death. St. Peter even makes the bold claim that even if everyone else did, he would not. It was easy for them to make such an exertion when they believed that the Lord's death would come in glorious battle. They would fight with Him to the death! But this is not how our Lord chose to die. He chose to be humbled, and beaten, and crucified. There was no battle cry, no glorious call to arms to answer. It is harder to rally the troops when the General willingly gives up His life into the hands of the enemy.

With one's Leader gone, how can one expect to stand and fight. It is for this reason that our Lord and Savior, + Jesus, the Christ, prepares His Apostles for the events about to happen. He tells them that they will weep and lament. Their Messiah has been captured, and instead of a glorious escape from both imprisonment and death, He patiently endures it and dies cursed upon a tree. He is buried in a tomb just like everybody else. This was the Man they thought would take the throne of His father David. He would usher in a new earthly kingdom. But instead, He dies cursed upon a tree, and is buried in the earth. They would weep and lament that He was dead and gone.

But our Lord + Jesus tells them that it will be even worse for them, for not only would they have to deal with their own weeping and lamenting, but the world would rejoice. How shameful it is to have others trounce all over your grief; to laugh at you while you mourn. It is sorrow multiplied. For not only does one have to deal with their own sorrow, but he also has to endure others mocking him for his sorrow. This is what the Apostles would endure. Why? Because in a little while they would no longer see the Lord. He would be dead and buried in the grave. They would not remember, or perhaps did not fully understand, that the Lord + Jesus would rise again from the dead.

This the ultimate goal of our Lord's suffering, crucifixion, and death. It was to defeat death, sin, and the power of the devil. Our Lord + Jesus was indeed waging a war; He did go into battle. But it was not with swords and stave. It was not with great armies of men. It was done in His own body. He waged this war in His own flesh, the flesh which He took upon Himself in His incarnation. He waged this war in our flesh. For He had already perfectly fulfilled the Law of the Lord God. He did not deserve death, like we do on account of our manifold sins and transgressions. He was innocent of all crimes and sin. But He took upon Himself our sins, so that by His death on the tree of the holy cross, He might atone for all of mankind's sins. Now, all those who cling to Him in faith, have the rewards that He earned by His suffering, crucifixion, and death. We have forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation.

If our Lord's battle with sin and Satan ended there, the Apostles would continue to weep and lament. We would have no hope of salvation. But our Lord + Jesus rose again from the dead on the third day, revealing that the heavenly Father did indeed accept His Only-begotten Son's death as a ransom for ours. By His death, He defeated death. He defeated Satan. He atoned for mankind's sins. He is now the Victor over sin and death. He is the ruler over life and death. This is why we can sing with mouth and heart. It is why we can rejoice. It is why the Apostles sorrow would turn into joy. For our Lord + Jesus has defeated death and Satan, and has opened up the graves of all those who believe on Him.

Imagine the joy of the Apostles on that first Easter day. They had been gathered together in the Upper Room with the doors shut, because of fear of the Jews—because they feared that now that their Leader was gone, they would be coming for them next—and then the Lord + Jesus appears to them alive in His own body. They could see that it was actually Him. They could touch Him. He even ate some food as a further testament that He was not just a ghost or phantasm. They could see the marks in His hands and feet where they nailed the nails. They could see the spear mark in His side. This was their Lord; this was the Lord + Jesus. He was alive again! He had defeated death and the grave. Truly He was the Lord of life. Imagine their joy at seeing their Lord alive again after death.

All of their former sorrows were now gone. Just like the travails of a woman in childbirth. She

endures pain and suffering while giving birth, but that is gone as soon as she gives birth. She now has her child, she can hold her child, and hug and kiss him. The sorrow is gone, replaced by sheer joy. This is how it is with the Lord's resurrection. The sorrow of the Apostles was now gone, replaced with sheer joy. Their Lord had waged a war by Himself over sin and death, over Satan and his army, and He came out the Victor. He is now the Lord over death and life. Just as He rose again from the dead in His same body, so too will all those who cling to Him in faith.

This is why even our sorrow will be turned into joy. For the Holy Ghost opens our ears and hearts to hear and receive the good news that our Lord + Jesus has defeated once and for all the grip that sin and death have over us. He has opened up the way into everlasting life. When we see our loved ones in the casket and lowered into the grave, we weep and lament. For we only see the death. But the Holy Ghost, our Comforter, keeps preaching into our ears the gospel of the resurrection of the dead. He preaches into our ears that those who have clung in faith to the Lord + Jesus—who have remained faithful unto death—will receive the crown of life. While their body rests in the grave, their soul is alive in heaven, waiting for the Last Day, when our Lord + Jesus will raise up all of our bodies and give us new and glorious bodies so that we may live with Him forever in heaven.

Indeed, my dear friends, we have a foretaste of this reality whenever we come to this holy altar and receive our Lord's Body and Blood in bread and wine. For as we sing in the Preface and Sanctus, we are surrounded by angels and archangels and all the company of heaven. While we few commune on earth, the entire host of heaven joins us in this celebratory meal which offers us the remission of our sins. This is why we celebrate this Supper with all due reverence. We are not the only ones here. The whole of heaven is here and watching us. It is celebrating with us. For every celebration of the Lord's Supper is a remembrance of what He did for us and for all mankind upon the tree of the holy cross. He defeated death, He defeated the grave, and He defeated Satan.

This meal is a victory celebration of our Lord's defeat over our enemies. Therefore, my dear friends, let not our hearts be troubled. Let us not remain in sorrow. For our Lord + Jesus has defeated death and given to all those who cling to Him in faith life and immortality. In this meal we are reminded of His victory over death. Indeed, in the whole of the Divine Liturgy we are reminded that our Lord + Jesus has won for us the forgiveness of our sins. We are reminded that He has shown us mercy, and paved the way for us to live with Him, and all the saints and angels, forever in heaven. It is the Holy Ghost, our Comforter, Who opens our ears to hear this through the pure preaching of the Word of the Lord God. Let us, therefore, hear what He desires to teach us today. He would have us not sorrow, but rejoice, for the Lord + Jesus has defeated sin and death, and given to us everlasting life. 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!