

Commentary on the Gospel for Mon, Sep 15th 2014

Proclaim the Death of the Lord!

“Proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes again.” When the words in St. Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians find their way into today’s Psalm text, they become a kind of command or “program of life” for all who believe in Jesus: Proclaim the death of the Lord! But why proclaim his death?

In this proclamation, St. Paul presents to us the heart of the gospel, the good news of Jesus. He expresses this truth in the Letter to the Romans: “God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us (Romans 5, 8).” The death of Jesus, far from being a disaster, shines as the supreme example of God’s love manifested in the coming of Jesus among us. The Gospel of John provides another summary: “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life (John 3, 16).”

To proclaim the Lord’s death, then, is to proclaim his saving love for sinners. This announcement becomes the heart of the early church’s preaching.

Do we find ourselves able to “proclaim the death of the Lord”? We know that our ability to proclaim that death, to proclaim his saving love, depends on the extent to which we ourselves have received it. Once the Lord’s mercy has pierced our hearts, its truth opens up a river that wants to flow out to others in need of that Good News. Today we want to recall the times and places where the Lord’s mercy has touched us, so that in savoring the memory of this Good News for ourselves, we become equipped to proclaim it to others.

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