

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Apr 13th 2019

Befriending our fears!

John chapter 11 focuses on the raising of Lazarus from the dead and its consequent impact on the Lord's passion. Beforehand, from the dialogue between Jesus and his disciples (verse 8 to 15), he clearly knew that he was going to raise him from the dead, and eventually did! Also, he stated the reason for this sign: that they may believe!

Dear friends we are close to the moments formally designated as the period of the Lord's Passion: Passion Sunday, Good Friday, Holy week! We are therefore being kept abreast with the reason for which he was condemned to death: his deeds and the consequent interpretations of his adversaries.

And so in today's gospel passage, the event of his raising Lazarus from the dead was reported to the Pharisees by some eye witnesses! Together with the chief priest they quickly convoked a council meeting, within which they strengthened their resolution with 'priestly prophetic utterance of Caiaphas', namely, that it's expedient for one man to die rather than the entire nation perish! Hence, they decided that he should die. A decision based on their fear of the Romans. Jesus relocated to a deserted place, yet they sought to apprehend him. Indeed his passion has actually set in!

We are confronted with very important lesson centered around basing decisions on perceived fears. Hence, we are invited to explore our fears in friendly manners. Fears becloud, blur one's vision of reality! But, probing in the style of 'side by side dialogue', like friends seated face to face, helps one to regain clarity of what is in question. Rather than base our decisions on perceived threats, we work through them in friendly disposition, clarify them. Clarity enables one to appreciate the gracious actions, 'signs' of Jesus in one's life thereby deepening one's belief in God.

Today we celebrate the Palm Sunday. We are in the Holy Week marked by our Lord's Passion, death and resurrection! It is a week full of emotions as we encounter various key players like the Jewish religious leaders (Scribes, Pharisees, Caiaphas).

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