

Commentary on the Gospel for Sun, Jul 3rd 2011

“Rejoice heartily O daughter Jerusalem.” The reading speaks about the end of all wars. There will be no more chariots or fighting horses. That’s equivalent to tanks and cruise missiles. Sort of. The point is that war will come to an end.



“Excuse me, Father. Have you forgotten about the world wars of the last century, the present wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Africa, the fighting in the Libya and various Arab nations, and all the blood that has been spilt throughout the Christian epoch? How can you say that there is going to be an end of war?”

The war that has come to an end is the war within us, each of us. Look at that second reading from Romans 8. St. Paul speaks about the spirit and the flesh. By spirit he means the power and presence of Christ, by flesh he means the materialistic world that is radically opposed to Christ. The concept that we can live for ourselves, selfishness, is the way of the world. The concept that it is other people’s problem if we use them is the way of the world. The times that we have engaged in actions where Christ cannot be found or the times that we have avoided actions where He is present, we are giving into the flesh.

To get specific: alcohol, drugs, selfish sex, living for the stuff that we accumulate and hoard, and so much more are the temptations that do battle against us. We are all stronger than these temptations because we have the Power of the Lord. The war is really His War, and He will end it and bring us peace. Consider this: when we get into things that destroy us, we are in chaos, or sin. We feel out of

sorts, but it is worse than that. Infinitely worse. We experience the destruction of our very being. We are in turmoil. But when we give in to Jesus, and throw out what is destroying us, or stay away from those people or places that are bringing us down, or go to those places or those people who need our love, then we are in peace.

This is the Power of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit. The very power that raised Jesus from the dead, is dwelling within each of us. There is no reason for any of us to be in chaos, in turmoil. The Spirit is within us and among us. The war is won. At least, it is won if we let it be won. Look, we can't be buying into the garbage of the world and live in the flesh. No, we have conquered death, actually, He has conquered death for us.

Yes, if we live according to the flesh we will die, but if we live according to the Spirit we will live. What force can be stronger than the very power that raised Jesus from the dead? We have this power. We have this Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit. We have found power and peace in Jesus Christ. The war each of us engage in is over...if we let it be over.

All this is really a mystery to the people of the world, particularly to many of the so-called intelligentsia of the world. It is so sad. So many of the intellectual elite are so centered in their own egoism that they cannot see the plain truth when it stands right in front of them, or when the Truth hangs on a cross. They know it all. They are so sophisticated. They are too arrogant to accept the Lord. Jesus was speaking about them when He said, "Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for what you have hidden from the learned and clever you have revealed to little ones." (Matthew 11:25)

Arrogance kills, particularly, intellectual arrogance. We have to be care that we don't fall into its trap. College professors and classmates, intellectually gifted students and associates at work, all attempt to make us feel like fools for believing in Christ. We can't let them destroy us. Instead, we need to pray for them to see the obvious: peace comes through commitment to Jesus Christ.

We need to go to Jesus. He is not arrogant. He is meek and humble of heart. So we go to Him. We submit to Him. We trust in Him. And the war within each of us is over. We are in peace.

Rejoice heartily, O daughter Jerusalem, rejoice heartily all you people of the Lord, rejoice heartily, for our Savior has come.

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