

PBS EUCHARIST; THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER, 2020.

The Collect for this Fourth Sunday draws us toward those things in our Christian formation that builds up and establishes hearts that are full of Joy. Hearts of Joy are formed when we love what our Lord commands, when we eagerly long for what Our Lord promises us, and we are stay firm on these actions even when the world around us is chaotic and distracting.

What does Our Lord Command? He commands that we Love. We love God with everything that we have got, our hearts, our minds, our souls; the whole of our being. These categories are what define the holistic approach to life and health. We talk of human beings being made up of the physical, the mental and the spiritual, and the command of God is that we employ all these faculties to bring about a perfect love for Him. If the physical does not have the love of God as its goal then there is every possibility that we fall into “all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness,” as St James says in the Epistle.

If we employ our mental faculties to construct a life according to every whim that the World would have us believe would be good for us then the chances are we will find reasons to argue away the Truth that Jesus teaches us. The truth that not only ultimately sets us free, but is the cause of our living life to the full.

And if we get carried away by every philosophy and creed, and construct our spiritual lives around the multiplicity of teachings that tell us that this way of being is good for us, then we construct idols and dethrone the one God who can only give us what we need to confirm that glory only flows back to Him.

This command extends outward toward our neighbour. When our Love for God is brought about by the transformation of our faculties, then it follows that that same love will overflow to all his creation.

What does Our Lord promise? that we will have a place with Him in the Kingdom of His Father; that we will enjoy His company for all eternity, that we belong to Him in this life and the next.

And finally how do we stay firm in the face of sundry and manifold changes of the World? We stay firm because we are not on our own in the battle. We are not on our own when the commandments seem impossible and His promises

unbelievable. We have for our support and teaching and advocacy the Comforter, the promised Spirit who guides us along the journey informing our proper actions and motives and thoughts. The comforter that presents us with Truth, because the Comforter is the Spirit of Jesus who is all truth. Wordly Joy is fleeting and temporary, true Joy in Christ is the joy that places us in heaven and it is by the help of the Spirit that our deficiencies are corrected and the right path laid before us.

AMEN