



DISCIPLESHIP



BOTH A *Question* AND AN *Answer*

by Fr. Dindo Purto, SSP

Jesus was in Ceasarea Philippi. And it was there that, Peter, together with the other disciples, finally got it right: “You are the Christ,” the Messiah. Following this episode is Jesus’ third prediction of his suffering, death, and resurrection. Peter remonstrated and Jesus rebuked him, calling him, “Satan” for thinking not as God does, but as human beings do.

The Gospel today plots this conflict at the onset. The ending depends solely on the quality of the response of his disciples. The language of Jesus is very prophetic but less reassuring. How many times has he been misunderstood and dismissed? Mark highlights this even more. In the second prediction of his

passion, Jesus teaches his disciples the content of his mission: “The Son of Man is to be handed over to men, and they will kill him, and three days after his death the Son of Man will rise.” The words are clear and accessible even to the simple-hearted, but it seems that the followers of Jesus do not measure up. Is Jesus impossible to follow? Or do the disciples have other plans in mind that do not fit well with Jesus’ proposal of authentic discipleship?

On one hand, discipleship is not about fitting one’s agenda to the demands of the Gospel. There exists one kind of discipleship that is very selective—one that picks up only what suits and benefits the person well and dismisses all others

that impede personal interests. This is echoed by James in the Second Reading, offering an answer to the predominating jealousy and selfish ambition that leads to disorder in the community. “You covet but do not possess. You kill and envy, but you cannot obtain... You do not possess because you do not ask. You ask but do not receive because you ask wrongly to spend it on your passions.”

On the other hand, there is the kind of discipleship suited to Jesus’ invitation that the book of Wisdom describes in the First Reading. The just ones (authentic disciples) are accursed by the impious whose formula of life is, “Be like us or else...” It is easy to confess one’s faith when everything goes well. Nonetheless, authentic discipleship requires so much more, that is, the capacity to stick to God and to live an upright life even though things are returned upside down.

Our Christian faith can be both a question and an answer to the world. We may be questioned when the Gospel values we propose do not coincide with the values the world upholds. But then, we must remain steadfast even if we are the last to remain standing on account of our faith.

PASTORAL CATECHESIS FOR THE YEAR OF *MISSIO AD GENTES*

Proclaim Christ without Ceasing!

Fr. James H. Kroeger, MM

It was a beautiful, sunny morning on November 29, 1970 that Pope Paul VI journeyed to the Quezon Memorial Circle for his public Mass. He began his homily by noting: “I, Paul, the successor of Saint Peter, charged with the pastoral mission for the whole Church, would never have come from Rome to this far-distant land, unless I had been convinced of two fundamental things: First, of Christ, and second, of your salvation.”

“Convinced of Christ: yes, I feel the need to proclaim

him. I cannot keep silent. ‘Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel’ (1 Cor 9:16). I am sent by him, by Christ himself, to do this. I am an apostle. I am a witness. The more distant the goal, the more difficult my mission, the more pressing is the love what urges me to it (cf. 2 Cor 5:14). I must bear witness to his name.... He is the companion and the friend of our life.”

“Jesus Christ: you have heard him spoken of; indeed, the greater part of you are already his; you are Christians. So, to you, Christians I repeat his name; to everyone I proclaim him.... I have the happy duty to proclaim ... the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior.” We ask ourselves: Do we have this same sense of urgency to proclaim Christ?

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

(Recited when there is no opening song.)

I am the salvation of the people, says the Lord. Should they cry to me in any distress, I will hear them, and I will be their Lord for ever.

Greeting

(The sign of the cross is made here.)

P—Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

All—**And with your spirit.**

Introduction

(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.)

P—Jesus tells his disciples that as the Messiah, he will be delivered into the hands of men and be put to death. The way to glory is through humility and suffering. But the disciples fail to understand him because they are thinking of their own personal glory that they hope to receive when Jesus is acclaimed as the Messiah.

Knowing what is in their hearts, the Lord places a little child in their midst. In God's kingdom, whoever humbles himself and serves the "little ones"—the poor, those with neither power nor voice—will be considered great.

Penitential Act

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.
(Pause)

P—Have mercy on us, O Lord.

All—**For we have sinned against you.**

P—Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

All—**And grant us your salvation.**

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All—**Amen.**

P—Lord, have mercy.

All—**Lord, have mercy.**

P—Christ, have mercy.

All—**Christ, have mercy.**

P—Lord, have mercy.

All—**Lord, have mercy.**

Gloria

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect

P — Let us pray. *(Pause)*

O God, who founded all the commands of your sacred Law upon love of you and of our neighbor, grant that, by keeping your precepts, we may merit to attain eternal life.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All — **Amen.**

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading (Wis 2:12, 17–20)
(Sit)

The godly life of a just person becomes a reproach to the wicked. They seek to do away with him because he is a reminder of their wickedness. The just one foreshadows the Lord Jesus who will suffer, die, and rise for the salvation of mankind.

A reading from the Book of Wisdom

THE WICKED say: Let us beset the just one, because he is obnoxious to us; he sets himself against our doings, reproaches us for transgressions of the law and charges us with violations of our training. Let us see whether his words be true; let us find out what will happen to him. For if

the just one be the son of God, God will defend him and deliver him from the hand of his foes. With revilement and torture let us put the just one to the test that we may have proof of his gentleness and try his patience. Let us condemn him to a shameful death; for according to his own words, God will take care of him.

— The word of the Lord.

All — **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 54)

R—**The Lord upholds my life.**

E. C. Marfori



1. O God, by your name save me,/ and by your might defend my cause./ O God, hear my prayer;/ hearken to the words of my mouth. **(R)**

2. For the haughty men have risen up against me,/ the ruthless seek my life;/ they set not God before their eyes. **(R)**

3. Behold, God is my helper;/ the LORD sustains my life./ Freely will I offer you sacrifice;/ I will praise your name, O LORD, for its goodness. **(R)**

Second Reading (Jas 3:16–4:3)

Jealousy and self-aggrandizement lead to conflicts and disputes. One who follows the Lord's teaching on humility lives a life of service and of peace.

A reading from the Letter of Saint James

BELOVED: Where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every foul practice. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure, then peaceable, gentle, compliant, full of mercy and good fruits, without inconstancy or insincerity. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace.

Where do the wars and where do the conflicts among you come from? Is it not from your passions that make war within your members? You covet but do not possess. You kill and envy but you cannot obtain; you fight and wage war. You do not possess because you do not ask. You ask but do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

—The word of the Lord.
All —Thanks be to God.

Alleluia (Cf. 2 Thes 2:14) (*Stand*)

All—Alleluia, alleluia. God has called us through the Gospel to possess the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel (Mk 9:30–37)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark
All—Glory to you, O Lord.

JESUS and his disciples left from there and began a journey through Galilee, but he did not wish anyone to know about it. He was teaching his disciples and telling them, “The Son of Man is to be handed over to men and they will kill him, and three days after his death the Son of Man will rise.” But they did not understand the saying, and they were afraid to question him.

They came to Capernaum and, once inside the house, he began to ask them, “What were you arguing about on the way?” But they remained silent. They had been discussing among themselves on the way who was the greatest. Then he sat down, called the Twelve, and said to them, “If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all.” Taking a child, he placed it in their midst, and putting his arms around it, he said to them, “Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but the One who sent me.”

—The Gospel of the Lord.

All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily (*Sit*)

Profession of Faith (*Stand*)

All—I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (at the words that follow, up to and including and became man, all bow) and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

P—Let us now voice our humble prayer to the Father, confident that we will receive his gracious care. For every petition, we pray:

R—Lord, make us humble of heart.

C—May Pope Francis, bishops, priests, deacons, religious men and women forsake the trappings of titles and remain humble servants. We pray: **(R)**

C—May we honor all people especially those who help us in our daily needs rather than the gods of money, sports, fame, and politics. We pray: **(R)**

C—May we not prejudge anyone on account of color, race, gender, appearance, or disability. We pray: **(R)**

C—May we maintain our humility before the Lord, as we face this pandemic through our faithful observance of health protocols to stem the tide of CoViD-19 transmission. We pray: **(R)**

C—May all our brothers and sisters who passed away from this life be admitted to God’s Kingdom where peace and joy are surely found. We pray: **(R)**

C—Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (*pause*). We pray: **(R)**

P—Father, give us a humble heart that seeks to please not the world but you alone. Show us your love in answer to our prayers so that we may continue the mission of your Kingdom which you have entrusted to us through Christ your Son and our Lord.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF
THE EUCHARIST



Presentation of the Gifts

(*Stand*)

P—Pray, brethren...

All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P—Receive with favor, O Lord, we pray, the offerings of your people, that what they profess with devotion and faith may be theirs through these heavenly mysteries.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

Preface III

(*Sundays in Ordinary Time*)

P—The Lord be with you.
All—And with your spirit.
P—Lift up your hearts.
All—We lift them up to the Lord.
P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For we know it belongs to your boundless glory, that you came to the aid of mortal beings with your divinity and even fashioned for us a remedy out of mortality itself, that the cause of our downfall might become the means of our salvation, through Christ our Lord.

Through him the host of Angels adores your majesty and rejoices in your presence for ever. May our voices, we pray, join with theirs in one chorus of exultant praise, as we acclaim:
All—Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. *(Kneel)*

Acclamation *(Stand)*

All—When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All — Our Father...
P — Deliver us, Lord...
All — For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion
(Kneel)

P—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.
All—Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.



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Communion Antiphon
(Ps 119 [118]:4-5)

You have laid down your precepts to be carefully kept; may my ways be firm in keeping your statutes.

Prayer after Communion
(Stand)

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*
Graciously raise up, O Lord, those you renew with this Sacrament, that we may come to possess your redemption both in mystery and in the manner of our life.
Through Christ our Lord.
All — Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P — The Lord be with you.
All — And with your spirit.

Solemn Blessing

P—Bow down for the blessing.
(Pause)
May the God of all consolation order your days in his peace and grant you the gifts of his blessing.
All—Amen.
P—May he free you always from every distress and confirm your hearts in his love.
All—Amen.
P—So that on this life's journey you may be effective in good

works, rich in the gifts of hope, faith and charity, and may come happily to eternal life.
All—Amen.

P — And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.
All — Amen.

Dismissal

P — Our celebration is ended. Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.
All — Thanks be to God.

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