

Wednesday after the Tenth Sunday after Trinity / Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost, 2020 A.✠ D.

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The earthly are not capable of the heavenly. The Cherubim and flaming sword testify. What we once had is lost, taken away because of sin. So it is that fallen men cannot conceive of the Divine Mysteries that God graciously uses for our redemption.

That we not be ignorant, that we come to understand the depth and the breadth of the love that God has for us, our Lord used earthly examples to teach Divine truths – fig trees and harvests and nets full of fish and a woman making dough and a woman searching for her coin and a wayward son welcomed home by his forgiving and loving father. They are all earthly images that help us understand Divine truths.

So it is that the Apostle, led by the Holy Spirit to teach us of the resurrection of the dead, a heavenly mystery, uses earthly examples. He employs facts that we well know to open to us a knowledge that surpasses our understanding.

All flesh is not the same. The Apostle argues from the obvious. Animals, men and fish have different flesh. The bodies in the sky are different than the bodies on the earth. Even the stars differ from one another in glory. But the Apostle is not speaking of animals or fish or stars. He is speaking of the resurrection of the dead. He is speaking of life after death.

All men of all times, men of all religions and all races, die. Death is the wages of sin. All men are sinners. Put another way – no man doesn't die. Philosophers can argue that God doesn't exist. But they can't argue their way out of death. You can't pretend it's not there. You can't reason with it, you can't eloquently debate your way out of it. Try as you may, you can't avoid it. Teach what you will, believe what you will – death still comes.

Each of us has been touched by death. We have all lost someone that we knew, someone that we loved. Each of us has learned to live with the emptiness once filled by someone dear to us. So while death is universal, it is also quite personal. It breaks hearts and ruins lives. It hurts – because sin hurts.

So in the Apostle's comparison of the different kinds of flesh, there is great hope. There is great comfort. For just as all flesh is not the same, just as there are terrestrial and celestial bodies, just as the heavenly luminaries all shine but with different brightness, so also is the resurrection of the dead. The glory of the celestial is one, the glory of the terrestrial another. But the God of glory who fills the heavens made Himself like you.

He took on your flesh, human flesh. The heavenly God took on earthly Flesh, exalting flesh. For unlike your flesh, His Flesh is without sin. But because He became Man, the eternal God, the source of all life, could die. And die He did, and that willingly. He was buried in dishonor. He was buried in weakness. He was buried a natural body.

But He who took your flesh to the grave was raised in glory, bringing your flesh with Him. He was raised in power. He was raised, still fully Man, with a transformed Body, as His Divine Nature worked through His Human Nature. And that is the Apostle's point: there are different

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kinds of flesh; the glory of the terrestrial is one, the glory of the celestial is another. So in Christ, Christ Incarnate, Christ crucified, Christ risen, the gap is bridged, the divide spanned, the opposites reconciled, the two made one, the rift healed, the enmity ended, the chasm breached – in Christ you are reconciled to God. You who are earthly are counted worthy of heaven.

Believing in Christ, His death is for you. You who are corruptible receive His incorruption, by faith in Him. You who are sinners receive forgiveness, by faith in Him. You who are mortal receive His immortality, by faith in Him. You who are terrestrial will don the celestial, by faith in Him.

However the spiritual is not first, but the natural. So you dwell now, in your natural body, declared righteous and sinless and holy. The natural must be planted that the spiritual come forth. But there is a resurrection from the dead. So there is a cure for death. His Name is Jesus. He took on your Flesh to save you. By faith in Him your sins are removed. In Him you live forever.

This day the eternal Christ gives you of His Body to eat. You, perishing, receive the everlasting. You, being temporal, receive the eternal, in a Meal more miraculous than the 4000 received. Believing, eating, you partake of the crucified yet risen and living God Man, and so you partake of His life. You eat, and you receive salvation and forgiveness. You eat, and you who are earthly taste of the heavenly.

He gives you His shed Blood to drink. Drinking, believing, your sins are forgiven. You eat and drink, and your death is removed. You eat and drink, and the resurrection is made yours. You eat and drink, and you receive the sure promise of a glorified body, a heavenly body, a transformed body.

For the Christ that gives Himself to you in the Eucharist this day will call you forth on that Day, and that which was sown will be raised, that which was planted will spring forth. For God has begotten you again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.

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