

New Brighton, Sunday 30th April 2023

3rd Sunday after Easter

“Tamquam ádvenas et peregrínos”¹

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

“As strangers and pilgrims”

These words of the Apostle St Peter, patron saint of our church, sounds quite familiar to us. Since the day of the Resurrection of the Lord, we are contemplating our Saviour, brought back to us by His own Will, after his death for our sins. We are in His Holy company, forgetting about the past penances and difficulties, filled with an overwhelming joy, that the Lord had gone, and is now back amid us.

We missed the consolation of receiving Him through Holy Communion, on Good Friday, to be able to desire Him more. Now He’s amongst us again, we would like this moment never fade and disappear again.

Today the Holy Church presents us with two excerpts of the Holy Scriptures, to help us in our journey. This contemplation of Our Lord, risen from the dead, cannot stop us on the way, but must be a great push to move towards Him, and never leave Him anymore.

The letter to St Peter invites us to continue our life as strangers and pilgrims upon this Earth, because our only real Homeland is not here, but in Heaven. And St John, in his Gospel, reminds us of the short time which is given to us, and can’t be wasted. If this time is well spent, we will receive the heavenly rewards we already waited for so long, but will need to expect a bit longer, until the hour has come.

These words sound like a consolation for us, living in this vale of tears. Today Jesus renews the divine promise we heard so many times: our reward is ready, and He’s preparing the place for us to receive it in due time. The Lord is comforting us another time, telling us about the heavenly homeland. His death and Resurrection prepared the way for us, and one day, on the judgment’s day, he will come back to share it with us.

These places were ready before, the Lord made them accessible to us by His passion and Resurrection. We can be made worthy of receiving them, if we faithfully fulfil our duties, practicing good Faith, and doing good action, protected by the shelter of the grace.²

“O Lord, almighty and merciful, complete what you began to prepare: make us worthy of you, and be generous to us, so that the various merits may be rewarded after different dwellings; then all of us, some more and some less, will share in your glory.”³

When a traveller, a pilgrim like we are, is starting a journey, he gives to himself an aim, a place to go. We are given this aim by the Lord: a place in heaven. The pilgrim also needs a

¹ 1 Pet., II, 11. Epistle for the 3rd Sunday after Easter.

² Ludolph of Saxony, Life of Christ, T6, chp. LVII.

³ Ludolph of Saxony, Life of Christ, T6, chp. LVII. Translated with www.deepl.com.

guide, whom he will find with the Blessed Virgin Mary. As we says in the litany of Loretto, She is the Morning Star, star above the seas, shining above our vale of miseries, our vale of tears. She's enlightening our path of salvation, her light showing us the stones to avoid, and the thorn to be protected from. She is the Ark of the Covenant, carrying the infant Jesus, and protecting us as she did protect him when He was a little one.

Take a look at the crossing of the Red Sea, and the one of the Jordan by the chosen people. One is stained with numerous deaths, the other one with none. One of the numerous differences is the presence of the Ark, which was leading the Hebrews crossing the Jordan. It protected them. As it did for them, Mary will do for us. We've been dead to sin, crossing the Red Sea of our previous life with the Passion and death of our Lord, leaving behind us a poor and miserable life dedicated to Satan. Now we're facing the Jordan, border of the Homeland. Like the Ark of the Covenant leading and protecting the chosen people, Mary will lead and protect us during our pilgrimage on Earth.⁴

Tomorrow is the 1st day on the month which is dedicated to Her. Let's go to her, with confidence. Her intercession and protection towards us is wanted by God. He wants us to go to Him through Her. She is the entry to the Harbour of Salvation. She is the watch in the darkness, the help of Christians, comfort of the afflicted and refuge of sinners.

“Sinner, whoever you are, if you have one foot in the abyss, if despair has already invaded your heart, look at Mary, think of her, and you will recover innocence and peace. No one, the Immaculate Virgin revealed it to Saint Bridget, no one, unless he is already damned, invokes this name with the intention of leaving sin, without the devil fleeing at once. [...] This name of Mary must be our breath, because in truth, says a holy Father, it is through Mary that the guilty soul breathes and opens itself to the hope of forgiveness.”⁵

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

⁴ Fr. Joseph Tissot, [How to profit from our faults](#), Chp. VIII, devotion to Our Lady.

⁵ Fr. Joseph Tissot, [How to profit from our faults](#), Chp. VIII, devotion to Our Lady. Translated with www.deepl.com.