

New Brighton, Sunday 14th April 2024

2nd Sunday after Easter

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

And the Lamb became Shepherd.

From the Calvary, where He is was slaughtered, without complaining, but praying for the forgiveness of our offenses, Jesus became our pastor, our leader towards heaven. “The good Shepherd giveth his life for his sheep¹.”

We are still astonished while contemplating the Holy Cross, gloriously enthroned upon our tabernacles. Astonished, because we remember all the sufferings it costs to Our Lord, all the pains of the scourging, the carrying of the cross and the crucifixion, but moreover the scarring vision of all our wicked sins. But contemplating and adoring at the same time, as it became the instrument of our salvation, and the Holy Wood that was chosen to receive the expiring body of the Man-God.

This Cross should be planted into our hearts, as it was planted upon the Golgotha. It is the mark of our faith, the definite seal that was given to us and the instrument of our redemption. We never deserved it, but we received it.

Jesus, out of His immense divine love, chose to lower Himself, “for which cause God also exalted Him and hath given Him a Name which is above all names²”. Amongst the multiple honours he now ought to receive from us, as being both our Creator and our Redeemer, he earned this title of Good Shepherd, to which is dedicated this second Sunday after Easter.

Because of the cost of His Sacrifice, he desires that not a single drop of his Holy Blood could be wasted. He desires that all men of good will, the same to whom the Angels wished peace at Christmas, come to Him, and subdue themselves to his sweet dominion, his sweet yoke.

Now one of the sources of the most poignant distress for the Heart of Jesus during His agony in the Garden of Olives was the perspective of the unavailingness of His Blood for so many souls who were to refuse the Divine gift: ‘What profit is there in my blood³?’ Christ knew that a single drop of His Blood would have sufficed to purify whole worlds, and sanctify multitudes of souls; out of obedience to His Father He consented with unspeakable love to shed, to the last drop, that Blood which contained the infinite virtue of the Divinity. And yet it might well be asked: ‘What profit is there in this blood?’

The great ambition of the Heart of Christ is to glorify His Father; this is why He desires with so much vehemence to give His life so as to bring to His

¹ Jn., 10, 11.

² Phil., 2, 9.

³ Ps., 29, 10.

Father innumerable souls who will bear much fruit of life and holiness: ‘In this is my Father glorified; that you bring forth very much fruit⁴⁵.’

Today, one more time, Jesus presents Himself to us as our Shepherd, but, in this Easter season, ornated with the marks of his Passion, the place of the nails and the open side, to show them to us, as He did to St Thomas last week. Look what did you cost me? Will you dare to deny me again as your Shepherd? Come after me, My burden is light, and my yoke easy. Sometimes, you may find difficulties, think of mine, while I was carrying your sins in addition of the weight of my cross. I took upon my shoulders and Sacred Heart the largest part. Come, entrust yourself to me, and you will find eternal consolation at my side.

“If, you abandon yourself without reserve to the Divine action of the Sacred Humanity of Jesus, He will carry you along with Him in that Divine Current which ever flows like an impetuous torrent in the bosom of the Word. There, your little personality will be lost and will disappear in deep adoration and perfect love; thus, all that comes from this personality will be destroyed⁶.”

Let’s immerse and abandon ourselves to this torrent coming from the Sacred Heart of our Divine Shepherd. Like the water flowing from the mountains polishes the rock, and from many asperities, at the end of the river, it becomes a nice pebble which doesn’t cut or hurt anymore, He will remove from us anything which is distorted, not charitable, not like Him.

“When you take the way of the Cross, unite yourself to the sentiments that our dear Saviour had; it cannot fail to please the Eternal father, if we offer Him the image of His Son. [...] If we let God act in us, after He has destroyed all there is that is human and natural in us, we shall be filled with His Life; it will then be the realisation of these words, ‘Christ is my life⁷⁸.’”

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

⁴ Jn., 15, 8.

⁵ Dom Marmion, Christ in his Mysteries, 20, 1.

⁶ Dom Marmion, Union with God, 4.

⁷ Cf. Phil., 1, 21.

⁸ Dom Marmion, Union with God, 4.