

Homily – Fr. Brad Neely

2nd Sunday Easter: Sts Peter & Paul – Holy Trinity: April 11, 2010

Act 5: 12-16; Rev 1: 9f; Jn 20: 19-31

Last week we celebrated
the rising of Jesus from the grave.
This week, in our second reading
from the Book of Revelation,
we are reminded of the profound identity
of Who it was that rose from the dead.
The apostle John says of his vision
of the heavenly throne:
*“When I caught sight of him,
I fell down at his feet as though dead.
He touched me with his right hand
and said, “Do not be afraid.
I am the first and the last,
the one who lives.
Once I was dead,
but now I am alive forever and ever.
I hold the keys to death and the netherworld.”*

The truth that God became flesh,
dwelt among us,
was crucified, died, buried,
and rose on the other side of death
is part of our faith.
This faith has been handed down
generation to generation through the Church--
and proposed for our belief.

This faith, then, comes from the **revelation of God**.
Thank goodness it has been passed along
to subsequent generations,
so that we, 2000 years, also know of the Good News.
Even with belief,
our faith necessitates the continual pondering
of its meaning, and intimate relationship with our lives.

What has been revealed by God
is not only that God is an intimate and loving God,
but as in our selection
from the Book of Revelation,
a God who is **transcendent**,
who is **“other”**--
--One whom John describes
as having a gold sash around his chest,
and standing among seven gold lamp-stands.

With all we have been given
in the line of the **revealing**
of the glory, perfection,
and transcendence of our Creator and Redeemer,
we never want to forget the reverence
that He is due.

We revere the one true God,
“the first and the last,”
who invites us to engage
in a personal relationship with Him.

He has gone to great lengths
to make it possible for us
to spend eternal life within His everlasting divinity.

The postures we assume
when we enter the Church,
and throughout the Mass,
speak to our reverence for the One
who has been revealed,
and whom we worship.
We enter within consecrated space---
space that is set aside and dedicated to worship---
and a space within which Christ resides
in the repose of the Blessed Sacrament.
Genuflection, bowing, standing, sitting, kneeling
all fit with respect to the liturgical action
in which we are engaged.
They speak of the reality that we,
who are **not** God,
are physically in the **presence** of the Almighty.
Silence within the consecrated space
of the church building
point to awe in the presence of God.
Our entire liturgy facilitates what is due God---
that is, thanksgiving for the gift of life,
and the possibility of eternal divine life.

It is good, often,
to consider the grandeur of heaven
as detailed in the Book of Revelation,
so that we do not lose sight
of the reverence that is due God.
The One whom John describes
in our Scripture reading today,
is also the One Who, in risen glory,
enters locked rooms
and shares His Spirit with us.
Remember that this is all part of our faith---
part of what has been handed down to us.
And with respect to reverence,
let us all bear in mind that Jesus,
as He appears in glory in the Book of Revelation today,
and also the Gospel,
says to those who see Him,
“Do not be afraid.”