

2nd Sunday of Easter (A)

The other day, I ran across this quote by Ralph Waldo Emerson, the American philosopher, essayist and poet.

He said:

“Thought is the blossom; language the bud; action the fruit behind it”

I spent a little time thinking about that, because it struck me as something that was both immediately true, and at the same time, somehow, flawed.

The flaw was not in the statement however, but in this: Our use of language, as a society, has become dulled, in the last few decades. We simply, do not speak, or write, the way we did in the past. Society looks upon such works as flowery, out of touch, perhaps a bit too lofty.

Maybe there is some truth in that, but what happens when we loose or dismiss the power of language?

We risk no longer having anything that motivates us as a people, as a nation, and as individuals aside from personal desires, and, hopefully, something vaguely identified as the common good.

For example, without the words of the Preamble of the Constitution, without Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address or Martin Luther King’s, “I Have A Dream” we risk being left with only feel-good statements to express what our actions should be toward discrimination, immigration and civil rights.

Nothing is left but a philosophy that favors justice, that is, legal justice over mercy and seeks to make us believe that “might makes right” over peace.

The words, the language, of today’s readings, are powerful words for

living. They speak of God's Mercy and what our response should be to that mercy.

Left to ourselves, our type of justice would condemn, and often does condemn, the sinner. But God has mercy on all who seek His forgiveness, doesn't He?

In the Gospel, Jesus does not ask His disciples why they ran away during His trial and Death. Instead He says, "Peace Be With You" and then gives them, the first bishops of the Church, the Holy Spirit and the authority to forgive sins, allowing them, and their successors, to bring that same peace of Christ to untold billions of people over the next twenty centuries.

He does not chastise Thomas, but rather He invites Him to touch His wounds, so that He might believe, and that through the telling and re-telling of this event, we too, might believe and come to know His mercy.

The Acts of the Apostles tells us today how the Early Church was the vehicle through which His Mercy flowed, and because of the way the Church lived, the way they responded to that mercy, many were added to their number.

The Church today continues to speak this language. In her writings, in her teaching, in her advocacy, Mother Church proclaims to all the world what it means to be merciful.

Every week, from the opening of the Mass, to the readings, to the Eucharist, to the dismissal, we hear and are witness to the language of Christ's peace and love and again, mercy.

But as Emerson pointed out earlier, language must lead to action. This language is meant to be proclaimed, loudly in even our most simple of gestures and actions.

Because we are freely given the Love and Mercy of God, we are able to

live in His Peace. And in doing so, bring that same love and mercy and peace, that same **language brought to action**, to those around us.

(PAUSE)

This is a great day (***for our community and***) for the Church!

(In only a few moments, some of our children will receive, for the first time, Christ's great Sacrament of love and mercy, They will make their first Holy Communion. They come forward, willingly desiring this Sacrament, because of the example of their parents, their God-Parents, and because of our example. So we all have good reason to celebrate with them and share in their joy) Also,

This Sunday, the man who canonized more saints than any other pope in modern history will be one step closer to sainthood himself when he is named "Blessed John Paul II."

Pope Benedict XVI will preside at the beatification ceremony in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on this Second Sunday of Easter, the last day of the Octave of Easter, also known as Divine Mercy Sunday, a commemoration that Pope John Paul II established.

Blessed John Paul II, perhaps more than any public person in recent history, lived out the languages of love and mercy, hope and courage for the whole world to see. He was not just our Pope, but was indeed, the world's Pope. He is held up to us as an example that **we can** live the language of God in all that we do.

Add to announcements: The Alumni FFA Pancake Brunch is being held today from 10 AM until 1 PM at the Sumner Community Hall. All are welcome.