



瀬田の丘



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Today' s Word

The Eleventh Sunday, Year A (21 June)

Parish Priest: Father Hiroshi Konishi

First Reading: Exodus 19:2 - 6a

Second Reading: Romans 6:6 - 11

Gospel Reading: Matthew 9:36 - 10:8

The words “Do not be afraid” appear three times in today’ s Gospel reading (verses 26, 28, and 31). Verses 28 and 31, in particular, can be literally translated as “Stop being afraid” (the Franciscan translation renders this as “Do not be afraid”).

In verse 26, Jesus says, “Do not be afraid,” because “nothing is covered that will not be revealed, nor is anything hidden that will not be made known.”

The word “covered” in Greek is “Calypto,” which means “something covering something else.” The Gospel that the disciples must proclaim is, for people, “something covered” and “something hidden.” Therefore, just as Jesus was, the disciples too will face persecution when they proclaim the Gospel. This is because, precisely because the Gospel is covered and hidden, it is not a message that sounds pleasant to people’ s ears. It is the same situation as that of the prophet Jeremiah in the First Reading, who was persecuted by people even while proclaiming the word of God.

However, Jesus says, “There is nothing hidden that will not be revealed.” The word “revealed” here uses the term “Apocalypto,” which combines “apocalypto” (from “Calypto”) with the prefix “apo,” meaning “away from.” We can understand this to mean “to be made clear.” Jesus urges us not to be afraid, for the day will come when the truth of his teaching will be made clear. For the disciples who were about to set out on their missionary work at Jesus’ command, the impending persecution was a source of fear. To help them overcome their fear of the future, Jesus urges them, “Speak openly... Proclaim it from the rooftops.”

The phrase “Do not be afraid” in verse 28 refers to fear in the present. Jesus commands us to stop fearing those who “kill the body.” Rather, the One whom the disciples must fear is God, the Ruler of life, “who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” God is the Master of life.

Let’ s focus on verse 29: “Two sparrows are sold for one assarion.”

Just as today, sparrows were common birds in Galilee during Jesus’ time. It is said that sparrows were eaten as food back then. As a source of animal protein, they were inexpensive and a familiar food for the common people. The assarion was apparently a small Roman coin, and one assarion was

said to be equal to one-sixteenth of a denarius, which was a day's wage at the time. It is said that two assarions could buy a day's worth of bread. Since selling just one bird would yield too little profit to be worth the trouble, they likely sold them in pairs.

There appear to be several translations of the latter half of verse 29. "But not even one of them will fall to the ground without your Father's permission" (Franciscan Translation). The Iwanami Shoten translation reads, "But not even one of them will fall to the ground without your Father," which is closer to the original Greek text. Professor Migaku Sato comments on this passage, explaining, "That is to say, it means that when they fall to the ground, God supports them and falls with them." It is a thought-provoking interpretation and translation. Finally, please look at verse 32: "in the presence of the people."

Fear of persecution is fear of the future; fear of those who kill the body is fear of the present. Yet in both cases, God is with us. Trusting in this, the disciples proclaim Jesus' words to those who do not recognize "what is hidden." In this way, they become Jesus' "companions."

Announcement

Noto Peninsula Earthquake Relief Briefing
June 27, 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM at Antonio Hall,

Father Kataoka from the Nagoya Diocese will be joining us to share an update on the situation in the Noto Peninsula.
There will also be a sale of relief supplies.

Hope everyone will join us.