

SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY; PBS EUCHARIST

One of the perennial questions posed by the faithful and the non faithful alike is the mystery of death that takes from us the good and the upright, the faithful and the innocent while to our minds imagining the wastrels and the deceivers, the guilty and the takers seem to thrive and flourish. I am sure that it isn't as black and white as that but the death of anyone that radiates beauty or innocence, or one that dies untimely and before all opportunities can be achieved seems to us a scandal.

There is a truth that comes to mind and worth remembering, that while we are dust and ashes we are equally in the sight of God in the words of Psalm 8 Verse 5, "Thou madest him lower than the angels: to crown him with glory and worship." We are but dust, we are crowned with glory. Human nature can be debased, some grow no more than the dust of the earth, while others attain a nature that is exalted and become crowned with glory.

Our Lord, before he ascended back to the Father gave them a foretaste of the comfort that would perpetually be available when he would send the holy Ghost, the one who would be at their side for all time, which in itself defines the word Paraclete or advocate, one who is called to ones side bringing the presence and the hope of the Son and the Father in a perfect unity of love.

And our Lord links the giving of the Comforter with the prediction of a dark future, rejection by others, expulsion from the synagogues and untimely deaths. And we know that all those disciples around that table listening to the words of their Lord, excepting John met early undeserved deaths. But we thank God that between the Resurrection of Jesus and his ascension he came back to show us and tell us that what ended in apparent disaster for him in the eyes of the world was indeed the path to a higher glory and perfect union with God. The disciples saw with their own eyes and were scrupulous in handing it on to us through the corporate memory of his people which we know as the church, his sacred humanity as a foretaste of our destiny.

There is a judgement beyond this world. The one cruelly trod under foot despite his innocence and tender years is the one raised to the place from where he came so that where he is in all his divinity and humanity we will find a home to. When we say the creed remember it doesn't stop at the words,

“And ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father.” It continues with the words, “And he shall come again in glory to judge both the quick and the dead.” And it goes on giving ascent to our belief in the Holy Ghost the comforter and finally the resurrection of the dead. The one who goes the way of innocent death shows us the way that all death always carries with it the hope of being crowned in glory with him.

AMEN.