

May 3, 2020 4th Sunday of Easter

By his wounds you have been healed!

Acts 2:14, 36-41

Psalm 23:1-6

1Peter 2:20b-25

John 10:1-10

In the first reading Peter raised his voice to let Israel know that God made Jesus both Lord and Messiah. If you repent and become baptized, he continued, your sins will be forgiven and you will receive the Holy Spirit. This is the way to save yourselves from a corrupt generation, and many were saved that day.

The prayer of the Psalmist acknowledges God as the shepherd who guides him along right paths, gives him rest and peace, refreshes him by restful waters and anoints with oil, and is present at even the darkest moments.

In the second reading Peter encourages **patience** when one encounters suffering for doing good things, just as happened to Christ, who was sinless, yet suffered and bore our sins. He was insulted and suffered but he never threatened retaliation in return.

In the Gospel Jesus describes himself as the gate through which we are to enter, and only there will we find peace and consolation and abundant life. It is his voice we must recognize and follow above the many words of false prophets who mislead with half-truths.

The Father made Jesus our Lord and Messiah
And we recognize His voice
through the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Peter reminds us that salvation from corrupt influences comes through our Lord, Jesus. Only the paths given by Jesus will envelop us in goodness and kindness. **We are to receive insults and suffering without threats of retaliation** and if Jesus heals us through his wounds, we are to seek healing for others in the same way. Enter by his gate when you need rest and refreshment.



Shepherds would often have their sheep put in common pens and when they were ready to leave they would call to their sheep who would recognize their voices and follow them. The sheep who was the animal leader of the flock would often be slightly lamed and then carried on the shepherd's back so that by the time he was healed there would be no hesitation in his following the shepherd and the rest following him.

*Let your mouth be constant in blessings
and no one's abuse will ever fall on you.
Insult generates insult and blessing, blessing.
(St. Isaac of Nineveh)*

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Patience¹



Imagine walking along, surrounded by powerful friends, and someone on the other side of the street starts cursing at you and throwing stones. What would your response be? King David was so accosted by Shimei, one of Saul's relatives.² David patiently accepted the abuse and said, "Perhaps the Lord will notice my *misery and give me some blessings to take the place of this curse.*" Shimei continued to follow, cursing, throwing stones and dirt at them as he went. The wisdom of Proverbs tells us that. "*A patient man is better than a warrior, and he who rules his temper, than he who takes a city.*"³

Certainly King David, a warrior and conqueror of many cities, could have ended the confrontation in a moment.

Paul put it this way, "*When ridiculed, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we respond gently.*"⁴

*There will be a time when loud-mouthed, incompetent people seem to be getting the best of you. When that happens, you only have to be patient and wait for them to self-destruct. It never fails.*⁵

Psalm 37 says:



*Be still before the Lord and wait in patience;
Do no fret at the man who prospers;
A man who makes evil plots
To bring down the needy and the poor.*

*Calm your anger and forget your rage;
Do not fret, it only leads to evil.
For those who do evil shall perish;
The patient shall inherit the land.*

Patience
The capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble or suffering without getting angry or upset.

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¹ **Patience** is the ability to endure waiting, delay, or provocation without becoming annoyed or upset, or to persevere calmly when faced with difficulties. (Wikipedia)

² 2 Samuel 16:5-14

³ Proverbs 16:32

⁴ 1 Corinthians 4:12-13

⁵ Richard Rybolt