

The Fourth Sunday after Easter - Cantate

Hymns: 3, 203, 205, 52

The INTROIT

(Ps.98:1,2)

P: Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! For He has done marvelous things;

C: His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory.

P: The LORD has made known His salvation;

C: His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations.

The COLLECT

O God, who makes the minds of the faithful to be of one will, grant unto Thy people that they may love what Thou commandest and desire what Thou dost promise that among the manifold changes of this world our hearts may there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.

The FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 12:1-6 (NKJV)

And in that day you will say: "O LORD, I will praise You; though You were angry with me, your anger is turned away, and You comfort me. Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; 'For YAH, the LORD, is my strength and song; he also has become my salvation.'" Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And in that day you will say: "Praise the LORD, call upon His name; declare His deeds among the peoples, make mention that His name is exalted. Sing to the LORD, for He has done excellent things; this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst!"

THE GRADUAL

(Ps 118:16, Rom.6:9)

P: Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

P: The right hand of the Lord is exalted:

C: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. Hallelujah!

P: Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more:

C: death hath no more dominion over Him. Hallelujah!

The EPISTLE

James 1:16-21 (NKJV)

Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures. So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

P:/C: Hallelujah! Christ, our Passover: **is sacrificed for us. Hallelujah!**

The HOLY GOSPEL

St. John 16:5-15 (NKJV)

“But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.”

Isaiah 12:1-6 — “For Great Is the Holy One of Israel in Your Midst!”

INTRODUCTION

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Isaiah 12:1-6 — “For Great Is the Holy One of Israel in Your Midst!”

Grace, mercy, and peace to you all from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Today is *Cantate*, the Fourth Sunday after Easter, and the Old Testament reading from Isaiah 12:1-6 is our text.

And in that day you will say: “O LORD, I will praise You; though You were angry with me, your anger is turned away, and You comfort me. Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; ‘For YAH, the LORD, is my strength and song; he also has become my salvation.’”
Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And in that day you will say: “Praise the LORD, call upon His name; declare His deeds among the peoples, make mention that His name is exalted. Sing to the LORD, for He has done excellent things; this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst!”

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

INTRODUCTION

Today is the Fourth Sunday after Easter and the Introit of the day is *Cantate*, Sing! ***“Oh, sing unto the LORD a new song! For He has done marvelous things!”***

After the Resurrection of our Lord, a new song, a renewed song that is, filled the hearts and lives of the Church on earth and the Church in heaven. Praise to God flows from the mighty works that He has accomplished. Who can behold such marvelous deeds worked on our behalf without knowing the glory of God which produces comfort and joy in the soul? Who can experience the goodness of the LORD without singing His praises? This is the declaration of today’s text.

I. IN THAT DAY

And in that day you will say: “O LORD, I will praise You; though You were angry with me, your anger is turned away, and You comfort me.

This has been the promise to which all true saints have clung ever since Genesis 3:15. This is the great prophecy by which we have life restored to us. Hope is regenerated within our souls by these words. They are even more powerful when translated literally.

And will say you in day that, “I will praise you Yahweh, for You snorted in me, You turned Your nostril and sighed!”

“In day that.” Which day is proclaimed here? This is a great and glorious day, a terrible

day. This is a day when the LORD God Almighty snorted with the holy indignation of wrath and fury against the sin of the world. This is a day when the LORD snorted like an angry Father on account of the murder of His beloved family. This is a day when darkness covered the earth and the very sun could not shine with its life-giving rays. This is the day when the LORD snorted the full condemnation of the Law against sin and all that is evil.

Oh Yes! Our heavenly Father snorted with anger and vengeance. **“Vengeance is MINE, I will repay!”** saith the LORD. And what vengeance He exacted from the Holy One who was made to be Sin for us!

And will say you in day that, “I will praise you Yahweh, for You snorted in me, You turned Your nostril and sighed!”

Yes! That was a terrifying day when even an unbelieving Roman centurion and the soldiers with him cried out, **“Truly this was the Son of God!”** In that day the LORD snorted with the full blast of the Law in me. He snorted from heaven against all the sin of the world in the one who took the sin of the world in His own body. The LORD snorted the terrifying Law that applied to me, and Jesus caught the full blast. The LORD Himself both snorted and was blasted to hell for me, for you, for all.

Then, having borne the fullness of the blast, scorched by its power, He turned His nostril heavenward, and sighed the final sigh. Yes, in this day, He sighed for us the spirit of peace so that the Law no longer causes us terror. Truly He has turned the anger of justice away from us so that we are comforted by the peace that surpasses all understanding.

Is it any wonder that in that day the prophesied response is one of praising the LORD? Is it any wonder that the song of salvation is renewed as though it were a brand new song for the Church? This is what God reveals to us through the Resurrection of our Lord. This is the answer of a good conscience that St. Peter says is given in Baptism. We confess our sins and we hear the LORD’s wonderful sigh of absolution and the song of salvation is renewed in us so that we sing His praises anew. What a glorious day is this day, when we sing as God’s regenerated sons of righteousness.

II. FOR YAH, THE LORD, IS MY STRENGTH AND SONG

Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; ‘For YAH, the LORD, is my strength and song; he also has become my salvation.’

How often we imagine that we must work something in ourselves by which we resurrect within our hearts the praises of God. If only we will hear the Word proclaimed in the Scriptures!

‘For YAH, the LORD, is my strength and song; he also has become my salvation.’

Our praises to God are not something that we must make happen. Quite the opposite is the case. For when we look to our own praises, we turn our hearts from God to ourselves. And what do we always find in ourselves and our own works? The very best that we can hope to find in our praises is failure. But we find much worse in our hearts and lives, don’t we? We find the most vile corruption in our hearts and lives. We find sin and death and perversion and hatred and strife and envy. Who can number the evils that dwell in us by our own accounting?

No, this is not the way to live! This is not the worship that the LORD seeks. He does not want for us to strive to be good or to strive to live lives of praise. He does not want us to strive to invent new ways of worship and praise. **“For YAH, the LORD is my strength and song.”**

Do you hear what is being preached to us? The LORD Himself is our song. He is the source of our praises. True worship of God is the fear and love and trust that is worked in us by the Holy Spirit through the means by which He calls us. True praise is the natural outflow of the powerful working of the pure Gospel. When the Gospel is administered purely, all that we see and hear and receive is the LORD who has become and is our salvation.

As God comes to us through the pure Gospel and Sacraments, He removes all that stands between us and His love. As He comes to us through these blessed means, when they are given to us without compromise, all that we see and hear and receive is His grace. Through these means He directs us away from our works to His works. Through these means He cleanses our hearts and souls and minds of all that we would produce for ourselves so that He is all that remains before us. When the pure Gospel is what we receive within His Holy Communion, His Communion that is purified by the pure Word, all that we see and hear and receive is His goodness, His mercy, His love, His peace, His comfort.

Now, if these are what we see and nothing else, what will be produced in us? Praise is what is produced. **“For YAH, the LORD is my strength and song.”**

III. FOR GREAT IS THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL IN YOUR MIDST!

Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And in that day you will say: “Praise the LORD, call upon His name; declare His deeds among the peoples, make mention that His name is exalted. Sing to the LORD, for He has done excellent things; this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst!”

When people are gathered for a great festival they are not quiet. Rather, they are filled with the joy of the festivity and they show the joy that fills their hearts. They sit down and they feast together and rejoice in the goodness of which they have been made to partake by the one who has called them together into the joyous communion.

This is what is proclaimed to us in this glorious prophecy.

Rejoice and shout for joy, O sitting one of Zion, for great in the midst of you Holy Israel!

This is the language of the great feast of the wedding festival. The LORD has called us together to sit down at the table of blessing and to eat and drink together at the table of blessing. He has consecrated the elements by which His body and blood are given. Thus, **“Great in the mist of you, Holy Israel!”**

Who is Holy Israel, or the Holy One of Israel? Who but the great one by whom we are saved? Jesus, the LORD, is Holy Israel in our midst. He comes to us through the Word, spoken over the bread and the wine and conjoined to these elements for us to receive. He calls us to come and to sit together and He promises to be in our midst to renew us in the song of praise sung in the kingdom of heaven. Thus the blessed liturgy urges us to say and sing:

Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Thy glorious name, evermore praising Thee and saying:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory; Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He, Blessed is He, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest!

Truly, how else would anyone respond? Who can sit in the Holy Communion of God where He Himself comes to us in our midst in the fullness of His greatness, offering us His very body and blood by which we are united in the pure doctrine and worship of our salvation, who can be a communicant of all this without being moved to shouts of jubilant praise? Who can truly receive these gifts within the purity of God's Holy Communion without being moved to sing the praises of God's great mercy and love? And when such praise is produced by such great gifts, who could possibly consider this to be a work or a burden or anything other than a heavenly gift and blessing?

CONCLUSION

Truly our lives are filled with distractions and worries and doubts and fears. This is why God not only invites but also commands that we "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." This is for our sake! This is for our good! We need to be called back into the gathering of the Holy Communion where we are fed and renewed in the LORD. We need to be made again to be partakers of His Holy Communion. We need the renewal that is provided for us by the LORD Himself at the table that He has prepared for us even in the midst of our enemies. This is the greatest day of the week! This is the day when the LORD gathers us together into His presence to receive Him and all the blessings that are in Him! This is the source of our strength and our song for life! In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus forever. Amen.