# “Rescued”

This week, we are on the third leg of our study of Kerygma which means, “Proclamation of the Gospel.” We first looked at “Creation. Then last week, we reflection on the topic of “Captured.” “You see, my friends, during a war, if a prisoner is captured, the commander would send a strong unit to rescue the soldier from the hands of the enemy. In this case, we the church militant on earth, have been captured by the enemy, the devil, sin, and death. We are literarily, in a fight for our lives. In His love and mercy, God the Father has sent His only begotten Son to rescue us from the clutches of the enemy, the devil.

God sent Jesus to defeat sin and death. But the world we live in now, has lost the sense of sin. Sin is what I define it to be. What God has taught us through the prophets and His Son Jesus the Christ to teach us is no longer seen as the essential truth. So many of us have become like Pilate, who said to Jesus, **“What is truth!"** To Pilate, truth is what he defined it to be and not what God who created us and laid down the way we need to follow commanded. In essence, people in the world, have made themselves gods instead of following the precept of God. It is time we turn away from sin and return to God who is the only one who can heal us if we accept His invitation. This is what Advent should mean to us. It is time we need to let Jesus lead us so we can follow.

We celebrate Advent and Christmas because Jesus came to fulfill the promise God made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David. He came to lead us home, to our true home in heaven. Jesus came to save us from sin and death and we look forward to His second coming. In our present world, we think things are not that bad and we make excuses for our captors: Satan, sin, death, and the world. But that is by our own definition and not according to God’s definition. Last week, we found out that things are not just bad but deplorable and hopeless without God. It is until we come to an understanding that we have been captured, that we can truly understand what God has done for us so we can be truly free and be rescued from our captivity.

Fr. Ricardo used the analogy of being enslaved by human traffickers to explain the condition we are in when we are captured by Satan. When we are captured by him, he will, make us suffer, we will be beaten mercilessly or even killed, in a similar way human traffickers treat their prostitutes, Satan keeps those who are captured or enslaved by him under his control. No one would know where they are or care about them or come to rescue them. They will experience hopelessness. Misery, they would be told to smile, when they would want to cry out for help. When we are captured by Satan, We will find out that we cannot set ourselves free. We need someone stronger than him to set us free from the cage he has put us into so we cannot escape.

Suddenly when we realize there is one person who we can call to help us, when like Peter, we cry out to Him. Who could that be, but Jesus our Lord and savior who created us and created Lucifer who became Satan because of disobedience. Once we cry out to Jesus, He will come to our rescue to safe us. He will bound Satan and put him in a cage because He is stronger than Satan. Then, He will gently untie our hands and feet, raise us up and hold our hands and embrace us as the father of the prodigal son embraced him on his return. Jesus would raise our downcast head up and look at us with love and the gentlest face beyond our imagination. And like the woman caught in adultery, He will tell us we are free and to sin no more so that something worse would not happen to us.

Holding our hand, He will take us out of the room. We will see the door opened and behold, we will see our captor in a cage bound tightly with the strongest chain. As we walk across the room, Jesus tells us, the devil can’t harm us now. Jesus tells us, He has come to set the captives free and if we would always follow Him, with our free will, we will be saved.

The situation described above is how God sees us as His beloved daughters and sons that He desires to rescue and protect as a hen protects its chicks. Like the good shepherd, He came down from His glorified place in heaven to be like us because only someone human like us but divine could rescue us from the tyranny of the evil one. He is our redeemer who has come to die so we can live and become His brothers and sisters and spend eternal life with Him. He is our God who created the universe which is 46 billion light years across and desires that you and I will become His family. What type of love could that be for us? It is agape love which is desiring only the good of the other that God loves us with. It is a love that does not think about self but totally of the other.

Please stay with me, can you imagine after the fall, what the Trinity would talk about! The Father would say, someone has to go down to save humanity we created. Then, Jesus says, Father, send Me. I will go. I will rescue them. I will go covered with human flesh so the devil will not be sure who I AM until I am nailed to the cross and raised up hanging on the tree of life. I will gather them and bring them from darkness into light with us for eternity. Some of us have taking Jesus for granted. Especially those who are afraid to come to Mass and see Him. They are afraid because of their sins. Sin set’s fear into our hearts, just like Adam who went into hiding after the fall. They are afraid that when they see God, they would be ashamed. They do not know the depth of God’s love for us.

As we continue through the midpoint from Advent, to Christmas, let us prepare our hearts by moving from sin into the comfort only God can give us. Let us use the sacrament of reconciliation Jesus left us because He, said, sin would come. It is by going to confession we will not call God a liar by saying we have no sin, as St. John said in one of his letters.

As we come to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, let us tell Jesus that we would like to break the chain of sin that shackle’s us to sin and death so we can encounter God’s love and mercy.