

ὁ λόγος παρακλήσεως
Lent 2-C; 13 March 2022
St. Thomas, Glassboro – Todd Foster
(rev. 202203130813)

Jerusalem, Jerusalem (rd Jesus' lament) In nomine patris...

I. Intro: War in Ukraine

Horrified, fascinated by war in Ukraine

Pure evil, unprovoked attack, bold-faced lies/disinformation
try to control narrative

actions corr'd shared values: respect, democracy, justice

Pres. Putin long-time player of these games

how long will we put up with/vulnerable to manipulation?

Exactly what we read about in Gospel: Herod coming after Jesus
king wants to arrest, by def. Outlaw

bad=good, g=b: sure sign: Herod/principalities/powers/evil

Jesus internal compass, settled conviction right/wrong

well-trained consciousness of reality of God: shaped choices

II. Thesis

Ukraine not only unjust war: just happened capture media spotlight
injustice around the world; evil runs rampant

some obvious, undeniable, like invasion of a large state's army

some hidden, obscured by subtlety

or by long cultural acquiescence

sometimes evil is culturally normative

White supremacy example of latter – one that hits close home -me
someone who benefits (unwillingly!) in real ways

from being classified as white

can be hard even to notice, acknowledge, much less act against
opposing W. S. is a spiritual struggle

not because I want to do evil

My moral compass not so well-trained, God-consc. settled as J

How fight back? Wage spiritual battle?

Some evils easily seen, easy to know how to oppose, repel

standing unarmed front of Chinese tanks at Tiananmen Square

Flight 93 passengers 9/11

casting Molotov cocktails at Russian tanks outside Kyiv

Some are harder to tackle, require not just one heroic action

sustained commitment personal sacrifice – long period of time

can require generations of effort to reset cultural compass

good once again good, and bad recognized as bad

e.g., Extreme economic disparities we find here in NJ

still mustering vision to even see, much less will to do...

III. Good News

Invitation of Lent: set aside comfortable norms, take fresh look
fast, pray not because easy/comfortable

seeing with own eyes painful

out of step with everyone around you – catch a few elbows

why we gather as church to do these things together.

Jesus calls out, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem"

sees evil cloaked in religious garb

religious leaders collaborating w/ schizo. state: calls good/evil

about to be crucified by Jerusalem, but not angry

heart-broken, inviting

mother hen, gathering chicks from storm outside

IV. Invitation

J makes same invitation to us today

Choosing good -others call it evil- is hard, scary, demands sacrifice

oil embargo – energy prices rise – political price – right thing

cause of *justice* and of *life* in Ukraine

Christians we stand against every evil: waging spiritual battle

beginning own hearts, extending out around the world

Lent set aside easy answers, stop depend on other authorities

practice paying attention to internal compass HS in our hearts

you were given that spirit at Baptism

Abraham believed: reckoned as righteousness

righteousness = believe God's good plans for you

more than believe world's distorted visions good/evil

As Church we discern presence of God in world

take God's reality=**our** compass, settled conviction right/wrong

us well-trained consciousness reality of God: shape our choices

enables us to live with power in the world

not our own; much greater power of God

We engage spiritual warfare, following J, guided by HS

by engaging that war in our own hearts we meet God

God already present, active in our lives

spiritual battle; cause of righteousness

notice beauty/number stars of sky, believe God's good will

like J, our choices (thought/word/deed) based on that fund. reality