

Homily for May 10<sup>th</sup> 2018

At the beginning of John 16 Jesus says to the Apostles.

***Indeed, an hour is coming when those who kill you will think that by doing so they are offering worship to God.***

There is a perennial evil in the world. People willing to cause untold suffering and death to others in the name of God. Here Jesus is talking about those who will be killing the Apostles in the name of Yahweh.

One of the gravest evils is how religious fanaticism results in non-believers concluding that religious people are unhinged and will allow for atrocities in the name of their God. But such views are and always have been deluded.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century experienced such a fanaticism on 9/11 when in the Name of Allah the Twin Towers in New York City came crashing down. The consequence of that horrible day gave rise to geo-political shifts in the Middle East and the rise of the New Atheists who claimed that 9/11 showed how delusional religious people are. The new atheists reach and influence has been far sweeping, with an increasing number of millennials concluding there is no God, thus wanting nothing to do with the Church.

Jesus in today's Gospel speaks to us with clarity about how such religious fanaticism affects those who are subject to this kind of horror. Here our Lord is describing to the disciples his crucifixion, that will happen on the morrow. What I want to highlight for you today is how the Incarnation of the Son of God brings Jesus so close to those, who like him were killed by people who thought that in carrying out such violence they were serving God. Jesus tells the Apostles:

***Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn.***

If you remember 9/11 think of how this is imbedded in your memory. Think of how its aftermath caused such pain to the families who were the first hand victims of such religious extremism.

Here Jesus says that the apostles will weep and mourn. This, by the way, is the only place in John's Gospel where the word mourning is found. John wants to highlight for us the intensity of the loss the Apostles are about to experience. Weeping in John's Gospel is always associated with the death of someone, like in John 11 where we are told Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus.

In a world where there are people so calculated in inflicting suffering upon the innocent, in the name of God, weeping and mourning have been heard down through the centuries because of innocent suffering.

Jesus affirms for us that there are times for such sorrow. But he also anticipates what the apostles and others will experience on Easter Sunday when he says: "But your pain will turn to joy".

In a world where there is so much weeping and mourning we need to always remember that because of the Resurrection sorrow is turned to joy. Not always now, not this week, not this month, or year and not always even fully in this world. The Resurrection of Jesus not only gives us hope but affirms that violent and distorted views of God cannot silence the merciful, loving God who in Jesus calls us each by name.