



**Blessed Sacrament Parish**  
**Homily by Monsignor Michael Kuse**  
**April 22, 2018 Fourth Sunday of Easter**

**Reading I Acts 4:8-12**

**Psalm 118:1, 8-9, 21-23, 26-29**

**Reading II I John 3:1-2**

**Gospel John 10:11-18**

**Homily**

You and I go back just a few weeks ago and we experienced the gift of Lent, especially the gift of Holy Week. And one of the things about Holy Week is that Jesus was telling his disciples who he was and that he was not going to be there with him, so they would have to learn to carry on. And that is why he washed feet. That is why is said, "This is my body and this is my blood." That is why he said, "I must go home to the Father that you may come home to the Father."

So now during these weeks of the Easter Season Jesus is using different examples to convince people that what he did with his death and resurrection has to continue, so he is telling us, "You must find your voice." That doesn't mean how well you sing, or how well you speak. What finding your voice means Jesus tells us, "You must find how you are going to follow me." And so he uses the story of sheep and shepherds. That was something they all understood. Today we have to translate that into the year 2018. How do you and I experience our faith, how do we give it, how do we receive it, and how do we find that voice?

Last night, some of you may have been there, I went to the Quincy Symphony concert. It was a magnificent evening. It was an evening starting off with church music in Latin. Then it went into a beautiful scenario taking science and all the various planets shown on a screen, and the orchestra accompanied with music. When you see probably 75 to 100 voices in the choir and another 75 musicians in the orchestra, all there to present the concert — it is impressive. They put in hours of practice, and they did that so that everybody who was sitting in the audience could enjoy the music. The beauty of it was that it was like church. When I go to concerts it was a third or half full. Last night the place was filled. The downstairs and balcony were filled. People just came in. I had to walk two blocks to get into the Junior High Auditorium. It was a traffic log all around 14<sup>th</sup> and Maine just to hear that voice of the music. It was just magnificent.

The orchestra and chorus practiced, probably hours, so that all of us could just sit there and not only be entertained, but revitalized with our own lives so that we could leave there and realize that if something is going to happen in life, it wasn't someone singing a solo, it wasn't just the violin, it was an entire orchestra and choir. And it wasn't one

person sitting in the auditorium, it was hundreds. And Jesus takes events like that to say, "See, that's what I'm talking about. There is no point for the orchestra and choir practicing unless someone is going to have the joy of listening, and it is kind of silly for a theatre to be filled and nothing happens."

When we bring that into church it is the very same experience. The choir spends hours weeks after week helping us to enter into the gift of music. We come here to pray. You can come in here alone and you can pray, but when you come in here and you see other faces and then you know we are all here for the same reason — to share Eucharist. We want to be fed. We want to find our voice. And that is so powerful in the message that Jesus gives to us. And our voice is going to be different for each one of us.

A couple of months ago I was on the plane coming back from Texas where I had been attending a workshop. Every body got seating on the plane. And all of a sudden right before taking off, this woman let out a scream and yelled, "Somebody open the window. Somebody open the window." Well, you just don't open windows on planes. I was about three rows behind her and was wondering, "What is going on?" Well, the gentleman she was with had passed out, and when he fainted she panicked. But luckily two rows ahead was a paramedic and two rows across was a doctor. And they came right to the man and within minutes the man was fine. Unfortunately for him, the pilot came and said, "We have to obey our rules and we are going to have to take you off the plane and take you to a local hospital to make sure you are fine. And then we will put you on another flight, at no cost to you whatsoever, and take you back home."

We sat there for an hour. But it made you think that this is really that voice Jesus is talking about. No one got upset because it could have happened to any one of us. After words I asked the stewardess, "Just out of curiosity, what would happen if I died on this flight?"

She said, "Well, we would let you sit there in your seat and whoever was next to you we would move away. Or, if the plane was crowded we would lift you out of your seat and put you in the back of the plane until we got home because no one can be pronounced dead in mid-flight. You have to land to be dead." And I thought, "Wow. This is something. I never thought about that. Now I get on a plane and if I die on here they are not going to claim me as dead until we land." Can you imagine dying in LaGuardia Airport and going out to Hawaii, and how long you'd have to wait before being declared dead.

The point is, Jesus is saying to all of us, "Listen to the voice. Listen to that voice. Every time you use your voice, someone is receiving. And every time someone else uses his or her voice, someone else receives." You all would look like a bunch of idiots in a few minutes when we have the sign of the peace when we turn and no one is there and you just keep shaking your hand. We'd say, "Maybe you need to go to a psychiatric unit.

Why are you just standing there by yourself shaking your hand.” We expect someone to be there and to respond. And when he or she responds — there is an exchange. It is that simple gesture. That is how we find the voice.

You and I find our voice when we are in the wombs of our mothers. And we pick up in the womb that voice when our mom is singing, whenever mom is talking, whatever mom is doing — that voice comes into the womb and when we come out for each one of us — we can still hear that voice. It is a gift.

So this morning may you and I just remember, we are called to be shepherds. We are called to use our voice no matter where it is, no matter how often it is, and we are to be Christ to one another — to be the shepherd. We also have to be able to receive Christ and when somebody else comes into our life and blesses us, leads us and guides us — we need to be willing to accept those gifts of love. It is that exchange that Jesus said, “What I am trying to tell you is — this is why I died and rose from the dead and went home to the Father — so that all of you could find your voice and find your way back to be with me.”

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