LOST SHEEP AND FALSE SHEPHERDS

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Beloved in Christ the Lord. On this third Sunday after Pentecost, which, after the feast in honour of the Most Sacred Heart of the Lord Jesus was instituted at the express demand of the Saviour Himself, has become the Sunday in the octave of the Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of the Lord Jesus, we hear a Gospel that illustrates what I spoke about on Friday, on the Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of the Lord Jesus.

On the feast itself, the Church reads a passage from the Gospel of John describing what happened on Calvary right after the Lord Jesus expired. And we heard that, behold, one of the soldiers opened His side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water. And these words of Saint John aroused our wonder. We wondered why Saint John the Apostle used these verbs: "opened," "came out." After all, we had pictured to ourselves how the centurion pierces the side of the Lord Jesus with a spear, wounds His Most Sacred Heart, and from that Heart blood and water flow out.

And we realized that Saint John wants us to grasp the events of Good Friday from a supernatural perspective. Behold, the Heart of the Lord Jesus is a gate, and that is why it can be opened, just as a gate is opened. "Gate of Heaven" — we sing in the litany in honour of the Heart of the Lord Jesus. Truly, the Heart of Jesus is a gate leading to heaven, the only gate through which we can enter into the joy of eternal life. And this gate of the Heart of Jesus, the gate to heaven, was opened for us on Good Friday, when Christ the Lord offered Himself in a propitiatory sacrifice on the altar of the Cross.

At the same time, we are perfectly aware that through a gate one both enters and goes out. So in order that we may enter through the gate of the Heart of Jesus into the kingdom of God, first there goes out through this gate into the whole world the grace of God — blood and water, which symbolize the sacraments of the Church. Sacraments through which the Lord God imparts His grace to us for a very specific purpose: so that we may be able to save our souls.

We hear in the collect of today's Holy Mass: "O Protector of those who trust in Thee, O God, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: multiply Thy mercy upon us, that, having Thee as our ruler and guide, we may so pass through temporal goods that we lose not the eternal."

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

My dear ones, we realize that the parable of the good shepherd who goes out to seek one lost sheep is precisely an illustration of what Saint John the Apostle wished to convey to us. The gate of the Heart of Jesus is opened, and God's grace comes forth from it. God Himself sets out in order to find the lost sheep, the sinner. God Himself did not hesitate to stretch out His holy and venerable hands on the tree of the Cross in order to complete the work of redemption, in order to pay the debt that we incurred toward the divine majesty through our sins.

The Lord Jesus stretches out His hands to that lost little sheep which has become entangled in thorns. He does not hesitate, He is not afraid that He will be scratched; He wants to free that sheep. This is precisely a concrete example, an illustration of that blood and water which come out through the gate of the Heart of Jesus into this world. The Lord Jesus did not die for the righteous, although no man is truly righteous; rather, Christ offers Himself for sinners and desires to find every sinner, like that lost sheep, and bring him to Himself, to His fold.

And such is the mission of the Church. Such is the mission of the Church, to which the Catholic Church has been faithful for 2,000 years: the search for sinful man. The Church bears this grace of God, this blood and water, which on Good Friday came out of the Heart of Jesus.

And on the other hand, look, my dear ones: we hear at the beginning of today's Gospel: "At that time the publicans and sinners drew near to Jesus to hear Him." They draw near to the divine Heart of the Saviour, because they know that it is a gate, that only if they pass through this gate will they be able to at-

tain the joy of eternal life.

THE FALSE SHEPHERDS

And, my dear ones, it is appalling that so many people today, like the Jews, turn their backs on the gate of the Heart of Jesus. Many people, ostensibly Catholics, believe today that there is another way leading to heaven than the Heart of Jesus. We are perfectly aware that there is no other way. We realize how true are the words of the collect which I quoted: "O God, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy." Nothing strong and nothing holy exists in this world without the grace of God, without the blood and water which do not cease to come forth from the gate of the Heart of Jesus in order to make possible the salvation of our souls.

Beloved in Christ the Lord. Abiding in this octave of the Most Sacred Heart of the Lord Jesus, we wish, on the one hand, to give thanks that this gate of heaven has been opened for us, and, on the other hand, we wish to pray that as many lost sheep as possible may understand where they ought to return: to the fold of Christ, to the true Church of Christ. May souls, my dear ones, recognize how many false shepherds there are today, deceivers who are not servants of the Lord Jesus but who lead poor people astray, straight into the fire of hell.

This happens because this new, post-conciliar version of religion, pseudo-Catholicism, is simply more convenient, demands little, and so many people today, my dear ones, allow themselves to be taken in by this Catholic-like product. So many people today follow false shepherds who are not in the least interested in bringing the lost sheep to the Lord Jesus. False shepherds who lead into the fire of hell.

And we must pray for all those who still do not wish to perceive in whose claws they find themselves. We must pray for all those who believe that many gates lead to heaven and that one can choose whichever one fancies. We must pray for all those who reject this fundamental truth of the faith, one of the fundamental truths, that outside the Church there is no salvation. There is only one gate leading to heaven, one gate through which God's grace goes out into this world. The grace without which there is nothing strong or holy. And only and solely through this gate can a soul enter heaven.

Let us never forget this, and let us do whatever we can to remind of it all those who have forgotten, who have been led astray, deceived. Let us do what we can to bring as many lost sheep as possible to the divine Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us do what we can to save souls from the spiritual slaughter which has been going on all over the world since the time of the Vatican Council, and let us repeat today the words of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre: "We want to preserve the kingly power of our Lord Jesus Christ in society. We want to proclaim that the Catholic Church is the true religion and that all are called to be converted to the Catholic Church, and that is why we will pray, we will do penance, we will try, by all the means we have at our disposal, to do good around us in order to convert souls."

Heart of Jesus, salvation of those who trust in Thee, have mercy on us. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Praised be Jesus Christ.