

PRESERVING OUR PEACE OF MIND: MONDAY, 9TH MAY, 2022; WEEK IV, EASTER.

ACTS 11:1-18; PSALM 42; JOHN 10:1-10

The Gospel of today prolongs our theme of yesterday. Our focus yesterday was on Jesus as the Good Shepherd. As a Shepherd, He leads, protects and provides for us. He provides not just material things but also peace, joy, hope and abundant life.

However, Jesus warns us that the thief is never far, that the enemy is around and his agenda is to steal our joy, peace and our heavenly inheritance, to kill us spiritually by destroying our relationship with God.

The devil does this in different ways. Often he uses people - people who oppose, criticise, condemn and malign us, people who hurt us and dampen our spirit. One of the strongest means of stealing our joy and peace is by raising malicious opponents against us.

This is what happened to Peter. God gave him a vision and a mission. It was a successful mission and he came back happy. However, many of the Jews in Jerusalem criticised him. The Greek word is "diekrinonto." From dia and krino, it means to separate thoroughly, to withdraw from, or oppose vehemently, to speak forcefully against. They spoke angrily to him and they condemned what he did.

We have a lot to learn from the response of Peter. He was not infuriated or bitter and he didn't allow the opposition to take away his peace. He responded with calmness, with a clarity that can only come from a serene mind. He explained point by point how his action was directed by God. The account satisfied the listeners and they gave glory to God and the enemy was put to shame.

Dear friends, let us be careful, so that the enemy does not succeed in using the malice and unfair words and opposition of people to steal our peace of mind and our joy in the Lord.