Fourth Wednesday in Lent
Rolling Meadows -- 1977

Rev. Carl F. Thrun

IN NOMINE JESU

ST. LUKE 22: 63 - 23: 5

I keep asking myself: "What would I do? If I were 'GOD OF GOD, LIGHT OF LIGHT OF LIGHT, VERY GOD OF VERY GOD' -- what would I do?" Just imagine -- putting a BLINDFOLD around Him who "SEARCHES THE HEARTS" -- let alone "HITTING HIM WITH THEIR FISTS" -- and then asking: "WHO HIT YOU THAT TIME, PROPHET?" ..... It is a good thing I was not JESUS! I would have EXPLODED and TOLD THEM OFF! ..... And BEFORE YOU CONDEMN ME, ask yourself: "What would you have done, if you had been in Jesus' place?" .... I identify with the man who prayed: "Lord, give me patience -- but hurry up."

Before the SANHEDRIN Jesus is accused of one thing: "THEY ALL SHOUTED, 'THEN YOU CLAIM TO BE THE SON OF GOD?'" Jesus answered: "YES, I AM."..Before Pilate He is accused of the same thing: "HE CLAIMES HE IS OUR MESSIAH -- A KING!" So Pilate asks Him: "ARE YOU THEIR MESSIAH -- THEIR KING -- THE KING OF THE JEWS?" "YES," Jesus replies, "IT IS AS YOU SAY." ..... It is ALL THERE -- hook, line, and sinker -- but Pilate still thinks He is PLAYING GAMES and he says to the mob: "I FIND NO FAULT IN THIS MAN." ..... Pilate is ABSOLUTELY RIGHT -- but he still SENTENCES JESUS TO DEATH!

Let me ask you: HAVE YOU EVER FELT THAT GOD OR THE WORLD HAS NOT GIVEN YOU A SQUARE DEAL -- a FAIR SHAKE?" Have you ever PRAYED HONESTLY AND EARNESTLY for someone -----

someone dear to your heart ---- and then after WAITING AND WAITING felt EMPTY INSIDE ------- and then BLAMED GOD FOR NOT HEARING YOUR PRAYER? ..... Do you ever feel that Christ is ASKING TOO MUCH OF YOU -- of YOUR TIME, YOUR TALENT, YOUR TREASURE? ..... What is all of this if it is NOT ACCUSING GOD AND CHRIST of being INCOMPETENT and UNFAITHFUL? Is GOD really ASKING TOO MUCH? Is He -- when His own Son is ACCUSED UNJUSTLY before the tribunal of CAIPHAS and the court of PILATE?

There are so many things going in our lives --- where again and again we would have to PLEAD GUILTY. You know it and I know it -- WE ARE GUILTY -- GUILTY AS SIN. We are GUILTY of spreading RUMORS, SLANDER, GOSSIP, MISINFORMATION, SLANDEROUS ACCUSATOPMS. We do that to ONE ANOTHER --- and so we do it to CHRIST! .... HE WAS THE FIRST to be ACCUSED and OSTROSIZED and CONDEMNED -- and FOUND GUILTY, THOUGH HE WAS INNOCENT.

So it is that PILATE CONDEMNS JESUS even though he declares JESUS INNOCENT. What PILATE doesn't know is that this is the SINLESS SON OF GOD. PILATE doesn't know that JESUS is the final and ultimate JUDGE OF ALL: "THE TIME IS SOON COMING WHEN I, THE MESSIAN, THE SON OF MAN, SHALL BE ENTHRONED BESIDE AKMIGHTY GOD."

Our DAMNING SINS betray us -- especially our sins of FALSE ACCUSCATION!-- of FALSE WITNESS! -- of SUSPICION! JESUS was CRUCIFIED by FALSE WITNESSES! Let us never forget that! He was MURDERED because of FALSE WITNESSES! Let us never forget that! But it is because of "HIS INNOCENT SUFFERING AND DEATH" that we have REDEMPTION -- "THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS, LIFE, AND SALVATION." It is because HE WAS ACCUSED that we stand ACQUITED! And LET US NEVER FORGET THAT!

"BEHOLD WHAT MANNER OF LOVE GOD HAS BESTOWED UPON US THAT WE SHOULD BE CALLED THE SONS OF GOD." He doesn't DAMN US as we deserve! He LOVES US WITH AN EVERLASTING LOVE! He goes all the way to the CROSS! He suffers and dies -- the INNOCENT ONE -- for us! He keeps quiet even when we "HIT HIM" and say "WHO HIT YOU THAT TIME?" He gives Himself to us over and over again in the BLESSED SACRAMENT: "AMy BODY.... MY BLOOD -- HERE AM I -- GIVEN AND SHED FOR YOU."