

Easter 4B

I'd like to take some time to talk about this first reading and how it applies to our life today

So here's the background – This is after Pentecost - Peter and John meet a cripple beggar

Peter says “Gold and silver I have none, but in the name of Jesus, rise and walk” AND HE DOES

The crowd is amazed, they knew this cripple, begged at the city gate every day, now he walks?

Peter begins preaching, people begin to believe in Jesus, crucified and risen.

Captain of the Temple Guard and the Sadducees arrest them, hold them overnight

The next day, brought before the Sadducees Peter speaks -

“Filled with the HS, Peter says

“In the name of Jesus, who you crucified, this man stands before you healed”

He says:

“There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved”

Now then, this text creates a problem for Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, non-Christians

I used to be Deacon in OLOS in Sharon

Sharon has 7 Synagogues, and the largest Mosque in New England – intermarried Catholics

Years ago, Cardinal Ratzinger, future Pope, as Head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith”

Everyone can go to heaven, and the reason they can go to heaven is Jesus.

Now this created a fire storm at the time – Christians (Anyone) Non- Christians (only Jesus)

This was Cardinal Ratzinger's logic:

We can't enter heaven in sin – Adam & Eve sinned – after sin entered the world we all sin

Adam&Eve, Prophets, Kings, we all sin – and so enter the realm of the dead

In the fullness of Time. The WOG becomes Man, God sends His Son

Jesus, fully human, fully divine, enters our world, lives sinless life, takes my punishment

He suffers, AND since sin has no hold on Him, RISES, ascends to His Father in heaven.

Fully human, His humanity enters heaven AND

NOW all who have died before and since have access to heaven as well

What Peter says is true

“There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved”

What Ratzinger said is also true – everyone Hindu, Jew, Buddhist, everyone who lives a good life now has access to heaven BECAUSE of what Jesus did

In the Gospel today Jesus says

“ I am the Good Shepherd, I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold, these also I must lead. This is why my Father loves me, because I lay down my life to take it up again.” FOR US, FOR ME, FOR YOU

REJOICE – He is risen – Gates of Heaven are open for all humanity – There is one shepherd, one flock, one savior, Jesus crucified, Jesus Risen – Alleluia – Alleluia – Alleluia – Happy Easter