

April 04 2020; Saturday of the Fifth Week of Lent

<http://usccb.org/bible/readings/040420.cfm>

If you've ever watched *Animal Planet*, you may have noticed that when a pride of lions goes after a herd of zebras, they never dive headlong into the herd; for there is strength in the zebras' numbers, safety in their unity. Instead, the lions spook the herd, induce fear, get it running. This spreads the herd out just enough that a lion can maneuver itself into the space between a zebra and the herd such that in the



moment it seems logical to peel further away from the herd... But if the zebra does that, near certain death awaits at the jaws of the rest of the pride waiting for it to make that fateful mistake...

Satan seeks to separate us – first and foremost from our Good Shepherd -- but much like the prowling lions, as a tactic toward that ultimate goal, He seeks to divide us from each other. He creates scenarios where some may see it as logical to peel away from the flock in this situation. But it is there they are most susceptible, to *“defile themselves with their idols, their abominations, and all their transgressions.”* In other words, spiritual death.

Ezekiel proclaims that God seeks to unite us, to *“gather [His children] from all sides... Never again shall they be divided... and there shall be one prince for them all.”* This “one prince” is Jesus Christ, who in our Gospel was prophesied would *“die for the nation... but also to gather into one the dispersed children of God.”*

That Great Work has been accomplished in His Passion we honor in less than a week. The war has been won, but battles rage on as Satan hopes to steal as many from Christ's flock as he can. Be wise to the tactics of the prowling lion! Especially in times of anxiety and fear and “social distancing,” it is no time for “spiritual vacation” -- don't succumb to the temptation to peel away. Run towards Christ; for as the Psalmist assures us, *“The Lord will guard us, as a shepherd guards his flock.”*

Peace,

Dcn Ron