

Funeral homily for James Pamadore

One of the most recognizable and, from a marketing standpoint, effective slogans in the history of television advertising is for a national insurance company, All State. No doubt you have, at one time or another, seen the commercial and heard the unforgettable slogan “You are in good hands with All-State”. It was coined by an advertising executive in 1950 and has been used ever since with evident success. In the commercial a man holds in the palm of his hands a house and car. The consumer is led to believe that he will find security and enjoy protection for his family by taking out a policy with the company.

The insurance agents working for All-State are known as the “good hands” people.

In Luke’s gospel Jesus dies praying the Psalms. He quotes from the thirtieth Psalm, which is a prayer every Jewish mother taught her children at the close of the day when she was preparing them for a night’s sleep: “Into your hands I commend my Spirit”. The mother hopes for a peaceful sleep for her children in the arms of the Almighty.

The historical context of this Psalm is worth noting. It portrays the rejection of the righteous one by his enemies but breathes throughout a quiet confidence in God’s saving power. It concludes: “Have courage and let your heart take strength, all you who hope in the Lord”.

The final prayer of Jesus is a prayer of trust. He is wholly at peace with God.

God is for us a refuge and strength, an ever present help in times of distress. We are encouraged to hide in the shelter of his wings until the storm passes.

Today we mourn the death of someone dear to the people gathered together for his funeral mass. Since the day of his baptism, James belonged to Christ. He was marked with the sign of his cross. He was a member of his flock. As his life drew to a close he was sheltered by the Lord.

In the hour of death we have no one else to turn but to the Lord. It is then that we learn the most valuable lesson of all, our dependence on God alone.

May God grant our beloved James a merciful judgment.

May perpetual light shine upon him.