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Parochial Vicar, St. Michael the Archangel

3rd Sunday of Easter – Year A (April 26, 2020)

Christ is risen!

Brothers and sisters, St. Peter himself speaks to us in our first two readings this week and in the weeks to come. In his words we hear the most basic proclamation of the gospel, which we hear from Jesus' own mouth on the road to Emmaus. The gospel, the good news, is that God's eternal reason—his Logos—willed to die at our hands, and therefore he has destroyed death. There are many parts to this idea, but I want to pick apart one which is particularly relevant now: Jesus is the Wisdom of God, the Eternal Word, or Logos.

We should really adopt the use of this Greek word logos, because its common translations as word or reason deceive us. When the Bible speaks of word, or reason, or wisdom, it's mostly referring to one idea—logos. If you clump all of those ideas together, you're starting to get the picture.

This is no small matter. The beginnings of the Gospel of St. John and the Book of Genesis—the keystones of our worldview—show this clearly. John tells us: In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God.... All things were made through [the Logos].... [The Logos] gave the ability to be children of God to those who believe in His Name. Moses tells us that God says, "Let *us* make mankind in *our* Image." Conclusion: **God is Logos and humans are made in the Image of Logos.** Therefore human beings are reasoning creatures. If we fail to be reasonable, we can call it an effect of the Fall, whereby we do not live up to the principles in which we were created.

What does the fact that God is Logos tell us? It tells us that **with God, nothing is arbitrary.** Our powers of reason—of logos, finite as they are, may not be able to grasp all of the conclusions of Infinite Logos, but that does not mean they are not logical. For this reason, God tells us all of the facts about himself that we cannot figure out ourselves, as well as quite a few that we could figure out, but most of the time wouldn't get around to. He also knows that we often come up with rationalizations that lead us away from the truth, so He gives us a standard to keep us honest.

The fact of the matter is that we often take conclusions of a reasoning process on faith. This saves us a lot of time and energy. I do not need to think through how my car engine works to use it. If it breaks down, it is a big help to me to let an expert look at it and fix it. On the other hand—I know how to bake bread, and I know the principles behind it, but I still go to the store most of the time because it frees me up for other things. But if the bakeries went out of business, I could get by if I had some flour, and that gives me some security. I can reason through a theological argument, and I often do so, but if St. Thomas Aquinas can give me a conclusion for a tough point I could go either way on, I'll gladly go with that. The examples are endless.

But what happens if we find the mechanic or the baker or the theologian inaccessible? We could despair, or we could try and learn some of the principles we need to do it ourselves. Or we could make friends with someone near us who already has that knowledge, or at least more than us.

But what if we find the mechanic or the baker or the theologian to be untrustworthy? Then we're in a real bind. In theory, we could go and do the same things we would if they were inaccessible, but now they're saying, "How dare you do it yourself? You will never know as well as us." And we might be tempted to believe them, especially if our starting knowledge is limited. "Just accept the facts," we might hear.