

## **Walk in the Light** (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent, Year A)

### **Ephesians 5:8-14—From Darkness to Light**

<sup>8</sup> [O]nce you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light <sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), <sup>10</sup> and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. <sup>12</sup> For it is a shame even to speak of the things that they do in secret; <sup>13</sup> but when anything is exposed by the light it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. <sup>14</sup> Therefore it is said, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.” (Ephesians 5:8-14)

1. **Walk:** “walk” (Greek *peripateō*) as “children of light” (Eph 5:8; cf. Psalm 1)

<sup>1</sup> Blessed is the man who *walks* not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; <sup>2</sup> but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. <sup>3</sup> *He is like a tree* planted by streams of water, *that yields its fruit in its season*, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. <sup>4</sup> The wicked are not so, but are *like chaff* which the wind drives away. <sup>5</sup> Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; <sup>6</sup> for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but *the way of the wicked will perish*. (Psalm 1:1-6)

2. **Fruit:** fruits (“good, true, right”) vs. unfruitful (“works of darkness”)

3. **Language:** how should those who are in Christ speak?

<sup>3</sup> [Sexual] immorality or any impurity or greed *must not even be mentioned among you*, as is fitting among saints, <sup>4</sup> *no obscenity or silly or suggestive talk*, which is out of place, but instead, thanksgiving (Greek *eucharistia*) (Ephesians 5:3-4; cf. NABRE)

4. **Resurrection:** death (= “sleep”) and resurrection (= “awake”)

### **The Living Tradition**

**Thomas Aquinas:** Thus he remarks that “you were heretofore darkness” blinded by ignorance and error: “having their understanding darkened” (Eph 4:18). “They have not known nor have they understood; they walk in darkness” (Ps 82:50). The darkness also comes from sin: “the way of the wicked is darksome; they know not where they fall” (Prov 4:19). ... [W]hen sin dominates a man the entire person is referred to as sin and darkness. Next, as “but now light,” he describes their present condition, as though he said: but now you enjoy the light of faith: “among whom you shine as lights in the world” (Phil 2:15), for “you are the light of the world” (Matt 5:14). (Thomas Aquinas,

*Commentary on Ephesians* no. 286-287; trans. F. Larcher)

### Questions for Discussion and Reflection (4th Sunday of Lent, Year A)

1. Who is Paul addressing in this letter? Why does their former life as pagans matter to the language he is using?

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2. How do Paul’s words present a challenge for us to “walk as children of light”? In particular, what do you think of the parameters he sets on what Christians should speak about?

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### For Further Reading

1. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians* (trans. F. R. Larcher, O.P.; eds. J. Mortensen and E. Alarcón; Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2012).
2. Peter S. Williamson, *Ephesians* (Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2009).