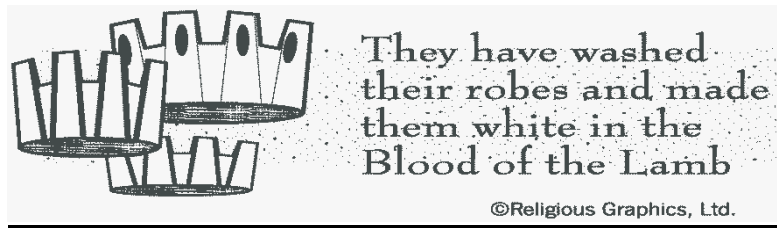


## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter



The scriptural word is more than just a letter from the past, it is a living reality. Today's readings speak of people who let the word live in their lives.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> reading, Paul cites the image of the suffering servant. It implies that he will reflect the successes and failures of the suffering servant. His failure was in his expulsion. His success, as all the disciples' success, was in the Holy Spirit and their joy. The activity of Paul is Luke's example of letting the Word live.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading, the white clothing is symbolic of their victory in remaining faithful; "made them white in the blood of the lamb." This is to encourage the Christians struggling on earth to keep their robes white as a condition for entrance into glory. To live the Word means to hear the message and act on it.

The Gospel is a segment of a larger scene that took place on the Feast of Dedication, Hanukkah. He answers the questions of whether he is the messiah by telling of his union with the father. He accuses his opponents of not being of his sheep. They expect a worldly messiah. His leadership did not rely on political strength but on faith in God and the Word. As in Paul who would follow him, the people react positively to the Word at first, but then reject it and cast them out.