

Catholic Parish of Blackiriars

Issue 23
10th April 2020
Year A

Under the care of the Dominican Fathers



VERITAS



Good Friday

HOLY ROSARY CHURCH

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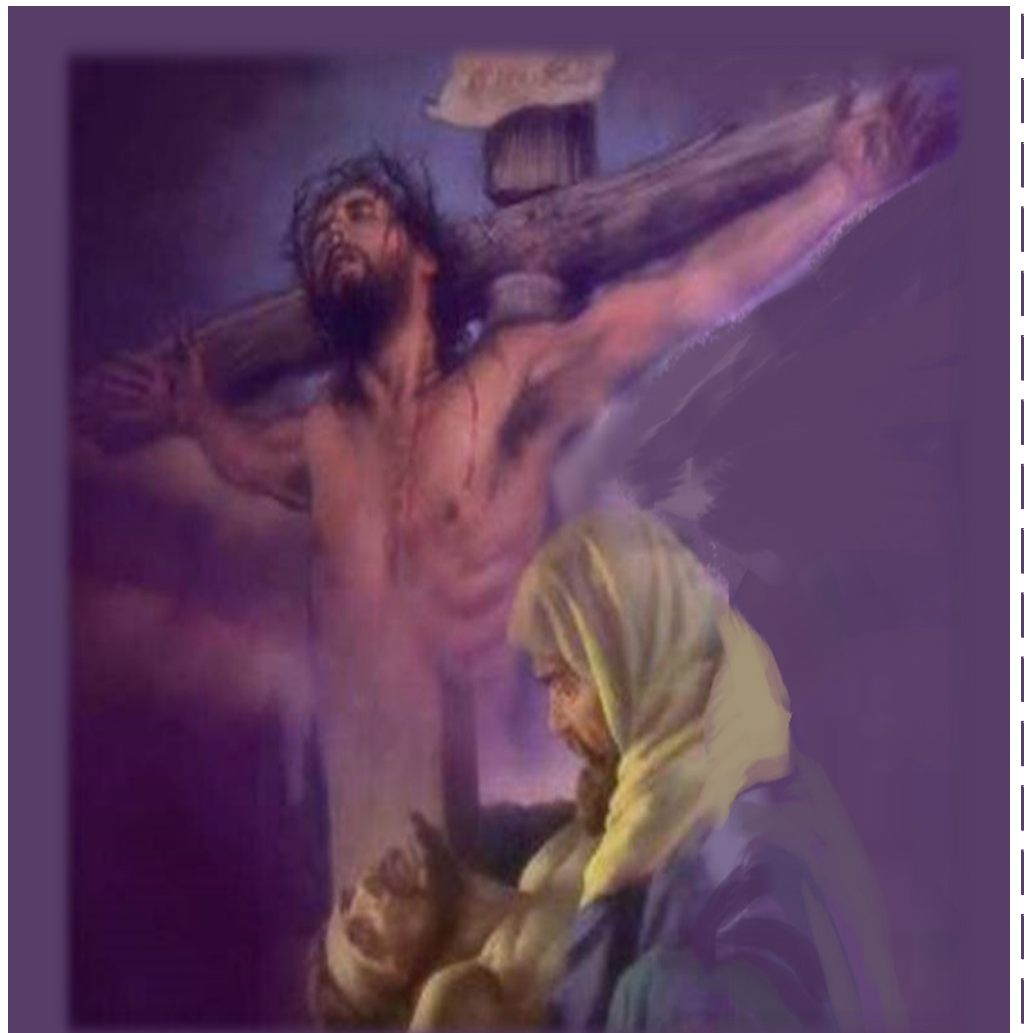
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Jim Smith

Holy Rosary Church
will be closed until
further notice.

**If you are in Urgent need
of a Priest out of office
hours call - 6248 8253**



Crucifixion

<https://www.facebook.com/Holy-Rosary-Parish-Watson-Canberra-105834614351072/>

A warm welcome is extended to guests & parishioners celebrating our Eucharist today.

FIRST READING

First Reading

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

See, my servant shall prosper,
he shall be raised high and greatly exalted.
Even as many were amazed at him—
so marred was his look beyond human semblance
and his appearance beyond that of the sons of man—
so shall he startle many nations,
because of him kings shall stand speechless;
for those who have not been told shall see,
those who have not heard shall ponder it.

Who would believe what we have heard?
To whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
He grew up like a sapling before him,
like a shoot from the parched earth;
there was in him no stately bearing to make us look at
him, nor appearance that would attract us to him.
He was spurned and avoided by people,
a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity,
one of those from whom people hide their faces,
spurned, and we held him in no esteem.

Yet it was our infirmities that he bore,
our sufferings that he endured,
while we thought of him as stricken,
as one smitten by God and afflicted.
But he was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins;
upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole,
by his stripes we were healed.
We had all gone astray like sheep,
each following his own way;
but the LORD laid upon him the guilt of us all.

Though he was harshly treated, he submitted
and opened not his mouth; like a lamb led to the slaughter
or a sheep before the shearers,
he was silent and opened not his mouth.
Oppressed and condemned, he was taken away,
and who would have thought any more of his destiny?
When he was cut off from the land of the living,
and smitten for the sin of his people,
a grave was assigned him among the wicked
and a burial place with evildoers, though he had done no
wrong nor spoken any falsehood.
But the LORD was pleased to crush him in infirmity.

If he gives his life as an offering for sin,
he shall see his descendants in a long life,
and the will of the LORD shall be accomplished through
him.

Because of his affliction he shall see the light in fullness of
days; through his suffering,
my servant shall justify many,
and their guilt he shall bear.
Therefore I will give him his portion among the great,
and he shall divide the spoils with the mighty,
because he surrendered himself to death and was
counted among the wicked;
and he shall take away the sins of many,
and win pardon for their offenses.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25

(R) Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

In you, O LORD, I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame.

In your justice rescue me.

In your hands I commend my spirit;
you will redeem me, O LORD, O faithful God. **(R)**

For all my foes I am an object of reproach,
a laughingstock to my neighbours,
and a dread to my friends;
they who see me abroad flee from me.
I am forgotten like the unremembered dead;
I am like a dish that is broken. **(R)**

But my trust is in you, O LORD;

I say, "You are my God.

In your hands is my destiny; rescue me
from the clutches of my enemies
and my persecutors." **(R)**

Let your face shine upon your servant;
save me in your kindness.

Take courage and be stout hearted,
all you who hope in the LORD. **(R)**

SECOND READING

Second Reading

Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

Brothers and sisters:

Since we have a great high priest who has passed through
the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God,
let us hold fast to our confession.

For we do not have a high priest
who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses,
but one who has similarly been tested in every way,
yet without sin.

So let us confidently approach the throne of grace
to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help.

In the days when Christ was in the flesh,
he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries
and tears to the one who was able to save him from
death, and he was heard because of his reverence.
Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he
suffered; and when he was made perfect,
he became the source of eternal salvation for all
who obey him.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Gospel Acclamation

John 13:13:34

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
Christ became obedient to the point of death,
even death on a cross.

Because of this, God greatly exalted him
and bestowed on him the name
which is above every other name.

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL

Gospel

John 18:1-19:42

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to where there was a garden, into which he and his disciples entered. Judas his betrayer also knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. So Judas got a band of soldiers and guards from the chief priests and the Pharisees and went there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. Jesus, knowing everything that was going to happen to him, went out and said to them, "Whom are you looking for?" They answered him, "Jesus the Nazorean." He said to them, "I AM." Judas his betrayer was also with them. When he said to them, "I AM," they turned away and fell to the ground. So he again asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" They said, "Jesus the Nazorean." Jesus answered, "I told you that I AM. So if you are looking for me, let these men go." This was to fulfil what he had said, "I have not lost any of those you gave me." Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into its scabbard. Shall I not drink the cup that the Father gave me?"

So the band of soldiers, the tribune, and the Jewish guards seized Jesus, bound him, and brought him to Annas first. He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. It was Caiaphas who had counselled the Jews that it was better that one man should die rather than the people.

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Now the other disciple was known to the high priest, and he entered the courtyard of the high priest with Jesus. But Peter stood at the gate outside. So the other disciple, the acquaintance of the high priest, went out and spoke to the gatekeeper and brought Peter in. Then the maid who was the gatekeeper said to Peter, "You are not one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not."

Now the slaves and the guards were standing around a charcoal fire that they had made, because it was cold, and were warming themselves. Peter was also standing there keeping warm.

The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his doctrine. Jesus answered him, "I have spoken publicly to the world.

Cont...

GOSPEL

I have always taught in a synagogue or in the temple area where all the Jews gather, and in secret I have said nothing. Why ask me? Ask those who heard me what I said to them. They know what I said."

When he had said this, one of the temple guards standing there struck Jesus and said, "Is this the way you answer the high priest?" Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong; but if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Now Simon Peter was standing there keeping warm. And they said to him, "You are not one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not."

One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the one whose ear Peter had cut off, said, "Didn't I see you in the garden with him?" Again Peter denied it. And immediately the cock crowed.

Then they brought Jesus from Caiaphas to the praetorium. It was morning. And they themselves did not enter the praetorium, in order not to be defiled so that they could eat the Passover.

So Pilate came out to them and said, "What charge do you bring against this man?" They answered and said to him, "If he were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." At this, Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law."

The Jews answered him, "We do not have the right to execute anyone, " in order that the word of Jesus might be fulfilled that he said indicating the kind of death he would die. So Pilate went back into the praetorium and summoned Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you say this on your own or have others told you about me?" Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom did belong to this world, my attendants would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not here." So Pilate said to him, "Then you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"

When he had said this, he again went out to the Jews and said to them, "I find no guilt in him. But you have a custom that I release one prisoner to you at Passover. Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" They cried out again, "Not this one but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a revolutionary.

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head, and clothed him in a purple cloak, and they came to him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck him repeatedly. Once more Pilate went out and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you, so that you may know that I find no guilt in him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak. And he said to them, "Behold, the man!" When the chief priests and the guards saw him they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him. I find no guilt in him." The Jews answered, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." Now when Pilate heard this statement, he became even more afraid, and went back into the praetorium and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" Jesus did not answer him. So Pilate said to him, "Do you not speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you and I have power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me if it had not been given to you from above. For this reason the one who handed me over to you has the greater sin." Consequently, Pilate tried to release him; but the Jews cried out, "If you release him, you are not a Friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar." When Pilate heard these words he brought Jesus out and seated him on the judge's bench in the place called Stone Pavement, in Hebrew, Gabbatha. It was preparation day for Passover, and it was about noon. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your king!" They cried out, "Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and, carrying the cross himself, he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha.

There they crucified him, and with him two others, he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus in the middle. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read,
"Jesus the Nazorean, the King of the Jews."
 Now many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that he said, 'I am the King of the Jews'." Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written." When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four shares, a share for each soldier. They also took his tunic, but the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top down. So they said to one another, "Let's not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it will be," in order that the passage of Scripture might be fulfilled that says:
*They divided my garments among them,
 and for my vesture they cast lots.*
 This is what the soldiers did. Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. After this, aware that everything was now finished, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I thirst." There was a vessel filled with common wine. So they put a sponge soaked in wine on a sprig of hyssop and put it up to his mouth. When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, "It is finished." And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit.
Here all kneel and pause for a short time.
 Now since it was preparation day, in order that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the sabbath, for the sabbath day of that week was a solemn one, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs be broken and that they be taken down. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and then of the other one who was crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one soldier thrust his lance into his side, and immediately blood and water flowed out.

Cont...

GOSPEL

An eyewitness has testified, and his testimony is true; he knows that he is speaking the truth, so that you also may come to believe. For this happened so that the Scripture passage might be fulfilled:

Not a bone of it will be broken.

And again another passage says:

They will look upon him whom they have pierced.

After this, Joseph of Arimathea, secretly a disciple of Jesus for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate if he could remove the body of Jesus. And Pilate permitted it. So he came and took his body. Nicodemus, the one who had first come to him at night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes weighing about one hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and bound it with burial cloths along with the spices, according to the Jewish burial custom. Now in the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had yet been buried. So they laid Jesus there because of the Jewish preparation day; for the tomb was close by.

<http://www.ibreviary.com/m2/lecture.php?s=lecture>

FROM THE PARISH PRIEST

Good Friday

Nos autem gloriari in cruce Domini Nostri Jesu Christi

But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,



THE CROSS

The late Archbishop Fulton Sheen said many things that were pertinent to our age, an Age that seeks comfort, expediency, and mediocrity.

One of the more poignant observations the late bishop made was the difference between Christi-

anity and other religions. More clearly he pointed out that you could walk into someone's house and perhaps be confronted by one of two objects, the first is a statue of Buddha, you know one of those statues of a plump little man sitting there without a care in the world, usually depicted laughing (now perhaps this is not a true depiction of what Buddha was like, in fact it is not) but nevertheless this commonly experienced statue presents itself as a cute little trinket no more, certainly it doesn't bespeak suffering or discipline. What of the other object that may be found in someone's house? There it is—a figure hanging miserably on two pieces of wood.

Cont...

FROM THE PARISH PRIEST

Sheen mentions that on seeing the crucifix we feel a pang of shame, it kind of gets to you, sometimes we find it even difficult to even look at. Mounted on that piece of wood hangs the God of love. The God who died of love.

So Why is Christ on the cross?

St Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians makes it clear why Christ had to suffer on the cross:

“ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2Cor 5:21)

If we explore the meaning of Christ's suffering on the cross and his subsequent death we must first look at the sacrifices of the Old covenant, those often messy goings-on in the Temple at Jerusalem. Sacrifice in the ages of the patriarchs and prophets took many forms, but the most important of these was the sin offering. In this act of reparation for sin we see however that “even when you offered sacrifice for a fault committed, and laid your hands on the head of the victim by way of transferring your guilt from yourself to it, that was only a legal ceremony; the fact remained that you had committed a fault, and it was the animal, not you, that suffered for it.”

Christ's death on the cross works in a different way from the old sacrifices. It differs in that Christ, as St Paul tells us, was made "into sin for us." (2 Cor 5:21). Jesus took on all of our sins as if he himself had done them but also taking the full consequences of that load of sin. Hence our sins are really taken away because someone takes the blame for them and also is adequately able to apologise for them. Unlike the legal fiction of the old sacrifices, us believers in the blood of Christ find true redemption and forgiveness in the death of the Lord.

Combined with the fact that Christ was made sin for us, it is also important to remember that only one who was both God and man could possibly pay the debt of punishment due to humanity. Mgr Ronald Knox puts it more succinctly when he says " To some, [Jesus'] atoning death is the only reason...why he came into the world. The affront which our sins offered to God was infinite, and if full satisfaction was to be made for it, that could only be done by a divine victim; so the second person of the Blessed Trinity became Man and suffered in our stead, the penalty we had deserved."

The reasoning then which I have just mentioned is the usual theological explanation of redemption. It is all fairly objective and neat. Yet it only answers the "how" of redemption. One must ask what was God's motivation in getting into the rigmarole of having the eternal Son be nailed to a cross and die a painful death.

So why did Jesus stay on the cross?

Pain! Whatever we may say pain is probably one of the things we fear as human beings.

Pain attacks our physical and mental well-being,



it stops us from enjoying life and generally it is something we earnestly try to avoid or get rid of. Hence we have all sorts of drugs available to get rid of our pain from Panadeine to Morphine we are a generation which seeks to avoid pain. And rightly so, no one wants it. But reflecting on

why we have pain is necessary to our understanding on the cross. We can't imagine Jesus pain on the cross, his head amassed with blood, the sting of the scourge still felt on his back, not to mention the intolerable feelings he would have received on being nailed through the wrists and ankles. All in all Our Lord's body was a mass of pain. Yet he could have jumped off the cross at anytime, with the blink of his eye he could have obliterated his enemies, healed himself and zoomed off back to heaven. But this was the deal, Jesus was no Superman. Unlike the hero of the comic book who could not be harmed by bullet or lash (we'll forget the kryptonite for the moment!) Our Blessed Lord could suffer, our blessed Lord could feel pain. It is on the cross that Jesus takes to himself all the pain of our human condition, from the debilitating agony of cancer to the atrocities of Auschwitz.

MERCY & LOVE

So God did not have to let his Son undergo the passion. So why did he?

The Angelic Doctor, St Thomas Aquinas answers our question. Aquinas' answer employs a more wholistic understanding of the Passion. Jesus death on the cross wasn't merely some kind of placation of a blood lusting deity high up in the clouds, rather Aquinas indicates "by Christ's Passion, many other things besides deliverance from sin concurred for man's salvation." St Thomas then lists the various benefits we receive from Jesus torturous death.

Aquinas lists several benefits which arise from the passion but the following are two of the more interesting benefits.

Jesus suffers so that:

- 1) In the first place, man knows thereby how much God loves him, and is thereby stirred to love him in return.
- 2) Secondly, because thereby He set us an example of obedience, humility, constancy, justice, and the other virtues displayed in the Passion, which are requisite for man's salvation. Hence it is written (1 Pt. 2:21): "Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow in His steps."

As usual with Aquinas he ranks his answers according to their importance, hence the most important reason why Our Lord suffered so dreadfully was to let men and women know how much he loves them. Aquinas does not stop there though; in fact a consequence of meditating on the passion should, Aquinas believes; stir one to love Christ more.

On this Good Friday let us meditate on what keeps Our Lord on his cross, on his mournful throne. Let us realise and stir up within us the deep love Our Saviour has for each and everyone us that leads him to this tremendous sacrifice. In his turn he also teaches us how to love. Love keeps no score, it is not boastful, it is not puffed up, but rather it seeks the good of the other. Jesus' love always seeks our good, indeed then let us imitate this pattern which Our good Lord has taught us, may we begin to love as he has loved us.

God love you all. You're all in my prayers

Fr Mannes OP

'WHAT IS TRUTH?'

This revelation that the very being of God is love is the "truth" which Jesus is striving to reveal through out the Gospel. People who are prepared to embrace this truth and allow it to irradiate and judge their lives "come to the truth" or come to the light". This struggle about the "truth" dominates what is, in fact, the centrepiece of the Passion according to John: the long drama of the trial of Jesus before the Roman governor Pilate. Jesus tries to bring Pilate to the truth but Pilate resists, ending up with his throwaway remark, "What is truth?" We should not fail to see the great irony in the situation depicted, as Jesus stands, bound and clad in mock garments, before the human ruler who claims to have power over him for life and death but who is, in fact, utterly bound and constricted by his fear of Caesar.

We can ask, 'Who is really bound here and who is supremely free? In this way the Gospel presents the superiority of simple humanity enlightened by God's truth over all pretensions of human rule and domination.

As Jesus dies upon the cross, his last breath becomes the free bequest of the life-giving Spirit, the accomplishment of the gift of life he had come to impart to all those who believed in him. In the person of his mother and the "disciple whom he loved" (a stand-in for all subsequent believers, including you and me), a new community is born, those empowered to become "children of God" (1:12-13) and to live out "the truth" into which they have been drawn.

[Extract Holy Week - Fr Brendan Byrne SJ](#)

PRAYER

Come, let us worship.

This is a very special day of intimacy with our Lord.
It is a day to pray the Stations of the Cross.
A day to stand at the foot of the cross
as a forgiven sinner - to stand there side-by-side
with everyone else who is forgiven.
It is a day of profound gratitude.

“GOOD” FRIDAY

Why do we call this “Good” Friday? Is it because we celebrate a good event in which all of us, “crushed for our sins,” are redeemed as “Christ became obedient for us even to death?” Is it because of the goodness of the man who “surrendered himself to death” so that we might “receive mercy and favour” and “find help in time of need”? Is it perhaps also because on this day “kings shall stand speechless” as those who are “oppressed and condemned” are liberated, those who are “accustomed to infirmity” are healed, and those who are “spurned and avoided by men” and “forgotten like the unremembered dead” are lovingly in the thoughts of a Christian community which prays that God “may heal the sick, comfort the dying, give safety to travellers, free those unjustly deprived of liberty, and rid the world of falsehood, hunger, and disease”?

Whatever the reason, we consider this day “good” as we celebrate “the triumphant death and resurrection of Christ.” It is good to remember the death, but always in the context of the resurrection. We are a “people who have devoutly recalled the death of your son in the sure hope of the resurrection.”

Our task as venerated of “the wood of the cross” is to overcome evil with good, to turn death into resurrection. We should not cower in the face of the enormous challenges posed by war, poverty, and oppression. The civil rights marchers sang “We shall overcome” in part because they understood the message of “the triumphant death and resurrection of Christ” and in part because they had placed themselves out of their comfort zone, walking the streets in the shadow of the cross.

We have to state, without mincing words, that there is an inseparable bond between our faith and the poor. May we never abandon them. Let us go forth, then, let us go forth to offer everyone the life of Jesus Christ. Here I repeat for the entire Church what I have often said to the priests and laity of Buenos Aires: I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security.

Pope Francis, The Joy of the Gospel, 2013: 48-49. Gerald Darring

FOR THE JOY THAT LAY AHEAD

Good Friday

Fr Peter Clarke OP

discovers the joy of the sacrifice of Calvary.

What a ghastly day, what a terrible day - the day on which Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Son of Mary, died on Calvary! And yet we name this, ‘Good Friday!’ – but not because we see it as being pleasant, enjoyable. For us this day is the most sacred of all days! From the Cross of Jesus flowed a quality of love that only could proceed from Almighty God. Perhaps, even more amazing, this same incomparable love flowed from a human heart – that of the Son of Mary, Jesus, a member of the family of mankind - our brother.

Cont... FOR THE JOY THAT LAY AHEAD

While St. Paul wrote, “If I am without love I am nothing,” (Cor 13:2). Jesus, speaking of His impending Passion, exclaimed, “No-one can have a greater love than to lay down His life for his friends” (Jn 15:13). In the divine person of Jesus sacrificial love surpassed all human limitations. “In Him, in bodily form, lives divinity in all its fullness. And in Him you too find your own fulfilment” (Col 2:9).

Jesus Himself made clear that we would only find our fulfilment by our sharing in His own sacrificial love. “If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Mk 8:34). The implications of this are daunting. Jesus was terrified at the very thought of what He was to undergo. In Luke’s account of the Agony in the Garden we read, “Jesus knelt down and prayed, ‘Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me. Nevertheless, let your will be done, not mine . . . In His anguish He prayed even more earnestly, and His sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood” (Lk 22:42).

Especially on Good Friday it is uplifting for us to be able to see that what God asks of us is often a way of life that amounts to sacrificial love for others. It is then Jesus calls us to allow our lives to be reshaped for their sakes. We shall then have answered this call of Jesus to die to a life of self-centred individualism. In so doing we shall have acquired something of the mind of Christ. We shall have become Christ-like.

Unobtrusively, countless people like you and me day after day respond to the needs of others—generously, willingly, lovingly—in the home, the work-place, within the community. What a wonderful Good Friday grace it is for us to be deeply conscious that we are actually carrying our crosses, side by side with Jesus carrying His cross. Like Jesus we are then doing what our Heavenly Father is asking of us—not, however, without a measure of self-pity and grumbling. Nothing unusual is being asked of us. This came home to me on the day I was taking Holy Communion to a young mother in Grenada. She was lying paralyzed on her bed. Her little son was sitting silently holding her hand. His wonderful love for her moved him to forego the joy of playing football with his noisy friends outside. It was my privilege to see here sublime sacrificial love.

As for Jesus, the love-filled joy He felt in laying down His life for us far out-weighed the agony He was to experience in His Passion. He rejoiced that through His sacrificial love He would bring us “the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life ever-lasting.” In this was brotherly love beyond compare! The Letter to the Hebrews would have us identify with Jesus in His sacrificial love of that first Good Friday. “Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who leads us in our faith and brings it to perfection: *for the sake of the joy which lay ahead*, He endured the cross, disregarding the shame of it, and has taken His seat at the right of God’s throne,” (Heb 12:5).

Good Friday teaches us there is joy to be found precisely in the stress and strain of our making sacrifices for others. It is then that we share in Jesus’ greatest of all loving—His self-giving for the well-being of mankind.

MARY MAGDALENE

There is a special kind of pain in watching someone whom you love in agony and being helpless to help him. This must have been what Mary Magdalene suffered at the death of Jesus.



The gospels report that when Jesus was crucified she was there. The comfort of being able to give him any comfort was unavailable to her. It must have been heartbreaking for her.

In these circumstances, she formed a plan. She watched till he was taken down from the cross, and she marked where they put his body. She gathered the necessary things and waited till the Sabbath was over. On the morning after, she went to the tomb to anoint him. If she could not comfort him in his dying, she could anoint his body after his death. It must have been her heart's desire to do so.

In her grief, she must have thought that she had lost her heart's desire irredeemably.

How much she had her heart in that plan is shown by her reaction to its failure. When she came to the tomb and found his body missing, she wept hard. Angels came to her to try to comfort her, but without making any real impression on her. There is no other biblical story in which angelic visits have so little impact on the person being visited! In her heartbrokenness over not being able to anoint the body of Jesus, Mary Magdalene brushed off even angels. In her grief, she must have thought that she had lost her heart's desire irredeemably.

And yet we know the end of her story. When Jesus appeared to her on Easter morning, he said to her, "Mary!" and she recognized him in the saying of her name. In that electric moment, her weeping ended. Her heartbreak at his death was over, and her heart's desire to anoint him, so pain-filled in its formulation, fell away. What she had wanted was so small by comparison with what she received then. What she had then was him, and she had him gloriously. Who could fail to miss his love for her? Neither she nor anyone else in her community—that is the answer. The whole community—apostles, disciples, family—first learned that Jesus was still present among them from her report of her experience of him.

And so, for her, the heartbreak of Good Friday was redeemed in love. That is the Good Friday lesson for us too.

Eleonore Stump

"Pain and suffering have come into your life, but remember pain, sorrow, suffering are but the kiss of Jesus — a sign that you have come so close to Him that He can kiss you." *St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta*

THE CROSS

The liturgy on Good Friday is the second ritual step on the Triduum journey. In the context of the one great liturgy, the death of Christ is not to be isolated from the fullness of the Paschal mystery. Good Friday is not a time of mourning, but rather, of remembering, of seeing once again the boundless love of God expressed in the self-offering of his own Son. Though Jesus of Nazareth dies in shame on a cross, God's love is so powerful that not even death can defeat it.

The Celebration of the Lord's Passion has three distinct parts: the Liturgy of the Word, the Veneration of the Cross, and the Communion Service. It's significant that the Gospel of John was chosen as the Passion account for this day. In John's gospel the victory of Christ shines through every step of the way. Death is not seen as defeat but rather as the passage of Christ into his glory.

Today, the liturgy begins in silence. We do not provide opening music or a call to worship. The rites assume that this is simply the continuation of the liturgy of the previous evening. We gather as family around the cross of Christ and embrace it as our own. Young and old, rich and poor, healthy and infirm, we all come to the cross to find hope and be saved.

Dan Schutte

ARCHDIOCESAN TRIBUNAL

With the pressures of modern life marriage breakdown affects many Australian families. For many in our community there can be a sense of isolation or even exclusion from the Church because of their marital status. The Tribunal can assist people who have experienced a marriage breakdown and establish whether they are free to enter a new union within the Catholic Church. Further information is available on the Archdiocesan website at www.cg.catholic.org.au under "Agencies & Services" or contact the: **Tribunal Office** Tel: 6201 9802 Email: tribunal@cg.catholic.org.au

CHANGE OF DETAILS

Parishioners if have changed your address, phone number or email address or are leaving the Parish **Please** advise the Parish Office.

In Your Prayers please remember those in our community who are ill:

Alexia Harris, Maria Martiniello, Greg O'Neill, Una Bell, Mary Martin, Barbara Wilson, Mary Bui, Anne Corver, Fr Ellis Clifford, Maureen Dawes, Edith Jensen, Awny El-Ghitany, Fr Joe McGeehan, Joe Schimizzi, Elsie Loughton, June Pollard, Paul Neddrie, Beth Delos Santos, Margaret Sullivan, Rosa Maria Santos, Pamela Sandy, Frank Zobec, Zelma McManus, Elizabeth Webster, Philip Bailey, Mimma Giampietro, Catherine Feehan, Maureen Blood, Charlotte Woolner,

Our recently Deceased: May they find peace and comfort in the embrace of the Lord.

Bernard Slammon