

## **GOOD FRIDAY 2020**

There is a clear direction given to all priests on this Friday of the Passion of the Lord. It states in the Missal, "After the reading of the Lord's Passion, the priest gives a short homily and at its end the faithful may be invited to spend a short time in prayer." Standing before the cross of our saviour, gazing on those 5 bloody fountains of his life blood, there really isn't more to say. We stand and gaze at the results of our individual and collective sinfulness, while He utters words of forgiveness and love back. It is time to still our own voices and internal clamour and listen to the words of the one who really only matters. It is time to look with open eyes and hearts on the pierced body of Jesus and know that every wound, every insult, every inch of flailed flesh is his gift to you and for me so that we can come to realise that every pain and every hurt, every struggle and every death has a meaning for our lives, for they find their meaning in His redeeming wounds, His life giving death.

There are some who would say, that if Jesus is God, If he is everything that we say about Him, Then why the pain, the suffering, the death? For those who ask out of a need to show the unreasonableness of faith and to show an intellectual superiority that resonates with those who stood at the cross and mocked, no answer will ever suffice for they do not see that learning is the same as understanding. But for those who seek to understand from the depths of their heart, those who try to see a fuller deeper meaning to the suffering and death of their own loved ones, who look upon the crucified body of our saviour and see an open gateway rather than a closed door, then the pain of this man, the suffering of this man, the death of this man is our only source of piercing the veil of understanding.

In a similar way, those who dwell on the surface of life, forever asking questions and never pausing long enough to discover an answer, think Faith is some kind of lucky charm. If you have faith then nothing bad can happen to you. And of course the opposite to this is if something bad does happen, then you don't have enough faith. Jesus is the object and subject of our faith. It begins and ends in him, and yet this man who gives faith its definition was neither spared suffering nor freed from death. So why should we? Again we see this in the scoffers and the mockers around the cross. When Jesus called in God from this throne of suffering, they said that he was calling for Elijah and seeing that he hadn't turned up to save Jesus then Jesus must be cursed as one who hangs on a tree.

But I want us to think on this. When you look at your cross today in your home, which I hope you are doing as we cannot do it formally, bring before them the pain of our loved ones, the suffering of your most dear; those you have known and have died especially those who have died tragically or before their time. Bring your own suffering, your hurts, your pain, your illness, your death and think on this as you look at the disfigured body of Jesus. Faith does not mean being taken down from the cross, being spared the difficulties of life, it means being lifted up to heaven, and like Jesus that can only be done sometimes by a cross, the cross picked out for you to carry.

AMEN