

Homily: Good Friday 2021: Is 52:13 – 53:12; Ps 31; Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9; Jn 18: 1- 19:42

“Entering more deeply into the mystery of the Lord’s Passion by meditating on and living the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary”

“It is love “to the end” that confers on Christ's sacrifice its value as redemption and reparation, as atonement and satisfaction. He knew and loved us all when he offered his life. Now “the love of Christ controls us, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died.” No man, not even the holiest, was ever able to take on himself the sins of all men and offer himself as a sacrifice for all. The existence in Christ of the divine person of the Son, who at once surpasses and embraces all human persons, and constitutes himself as the Head of all mankind, makes possible his redemptive sacrifice for all” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, par 616).

- **The Sorrowful Mysteries** are truly where our Catholic faith is put to the test to see if it is authentic or not, if we are being conformed to Christ Crucified or not.
- **The Agony in the Garden:** In our time we need a holy realism knowing that living our Catholic faith well will involve much suffering - and much of it of an interior type. The challenges of our time are numerous in regard to the Faith. With the pandemic, and the political division and hatred in our country, the spiritual indifferentism of even many Christians cause those of us who are serious about the Faith to suffer, esp. when the people are close to us on a human level; but remember if we unite these interior sufferings with Jesus in company with Mary in His holy agony they will bear great spiritual fruit for our soul and for the salvation of others esp. family and friends who have turned their back on the Faith in either hostility or indifferentism. Thank you Jesus for letting us share in Your Agony in our daily life and may we embrace it for love of You, and fill us with the interior peace and joy that only comes from You.
- **The Scourging at the Pillar:** Another aspect of sharing in the sorrowful mysteries involves physical suffering. Think of the brutal beating Jesus took in His Sacred body to make reparation for the sins of the flesh and all the other ways we humans sin with our bodies. All of us know that stress and age take their toll on our bodies, and we all have different physical Crosses in terms of health, but all of this contributes to our growth in holiness as well as assisting Jesus in company with Mary in helping to save other souls - if we unite our physical sufferings and bodily penances with Christ. Thank you Jesus for letting us share in Scourging in our daily life and may we embrace it for love of You in a spirit of peace and joy and trust.
- **The Crowning with Thorns:** Being a devout Catholic today means being a sign of contradiction in our feel-good secular world, Our retired Pope Benedict in his famous work *Introduction to Christianity* written in the late 60’s ***compared a devout priest (but it also could apply now to a devout Catholic) to a clown in a circus (who is seen as sadly***

amusing), or to a man telling the townspeople a fire is coming which will destroy their town and the people laugh and mock him. How much more 50 + years later this is sadly true. In the Crowning with thorns Jesus made reparation for our sins in our mind. Let's honor him there and turn away from pride, anger, and impure thoughts. For all us here honoring our Lord's Passion, *don't be afraid to stand out for the Catholic vision of the purpose of life because the Lord will use us to draw other souls to Him by the power of the Holy Spirit which Jesus promises in His Last Supper Discourse in St. John's Gospel.* **God's ways are not our ways!** We're not to play a numbers game, but to be faithful to our charge from God. Thank you Jesus for letting us share in Your Crowning with Thorns in our daily life and may we embrace it for the love of You and the salvation of souls.

- **The Carrying of the Cross:** At various times the Cross of our life as Catholics can be heavy, but also sweet as there is nothing better than working for Jesus in the noblest mission of all: the salvation of souls! And to arrive at the Resurrection we must go through our own Good Friday – uniquely provided for each one of us by God if we are willing to trust Him - see the Divine Mercy devotion. Let us never forget Jesus will help us carry our Cross, and our Lady and St. Joseph and our favorite saints will be there as well to help us carry the load. Thank you Jesus for letting us share in Your Cross in our daily life and may we embrace it for love of You and the salvation of souls.
- **The Crucifixion:** I will never forget the sage teaching of my late spiritual director, the Passionist Priest: Fr. Silvan Rouse, C.P., who lived in Bedford for many years. Truly the holiest priest I have ever met! Fr. Silvan over and over again told me the priesthood is also a call to share in the victimhood of Christ. He bemoaned the fact that this is rarely taught in seminaries today, as we are all influenced by our feel-good culture. What he meant was: *it's not by the overt things we do as priests in preaching, and celebrating the Sacraments, and administering the Parish - all important for sure - but ultimately to bear spiritual fruit we always must root our priestly life in the interior participation the mystery of the Cross with Jesus (**the Mystical understanding of the Passion**) – which is where the graces ultimately come from.* This truth also applies to all lay people in your vocation. *We can't forget to unite ourselves daily with Jesus ON HIS CROSS, hopefully suffering ever more faithfully over the years (through the natural ups and downs of the spiritual life) in union with Christ, all the trials and tribulations permitted and ordained by God in His Holy Providence, as well as taking on voluntary sacrifices for conversion of hardened sinners of which there are many in our world today – only then - will we ultimately fulfill our mission to be another Christ, a saint, for the glory of God and for the salvation of souls.* Thank you Jesus for letting us share in Your Cross, with love, in our daily life, so we can someday come to the glory of the Resurrection and that perfect communion with You and the Father and the Holy Spirit. *For the Sake of His Sorrowful Passion have mercy on us and on the whole world!* God bless you.