

Good Friday

Today we celebrate in commemoration the passion of Jesus which purchased our salvation, reconciled us to God the Father and assured our fraternity with Jesus Christ. Within this liturgy, we listen to the account of the Lord's passion, suffering and death. We behold the Cross which serves as a visible symbol of God's love for you, for me and for all humanity. Finally, we consume what is left of the sacrificial lamb. The whole concept is oxymoronic in character. We gained victory, healing, forgiveness and reconciliation at the price of our innocent sinless victim. Jesus had to die so that you, me and all humanity may gain eternal life. Christ died to end sin and the human wickedness. All has been paid for, in full. What remains now is that we work out our salvation with fear and trembling and so make up what remains in the cross of Christ.

Today, most of us are in sorry mourning of the wicked death of Jesus; or mourning the wickedness which is still alive in our society today. But all that Jesus requires of us is to die to self so that we may have eternal life. For unless a grain falls to the ground and dies, it decays just as a grain. Those who preserve their life will lose it, and those who offer their life for the sake of the Kingdom will preserve it eternally. Just as Jesus' suffering was real, ours too, until we see the Father face to face, will be real. Hence Jesus encourages us to take up our crosses and follow Him. The truth is that He did not eliminate the cross, suffering and death; they are our prelude to the Father. And many times, we glorify God through them. Death itself bestows respect and dignity to life.

Today's liturgy is divided into three parts. Namely: the liturgy of the Word, veneration of the Cross and sharing in the Holy Communion. The liturgy of the Word commences after the opening prayer and it includes all the readings, homily and the solemn intercessory prayers. Then the Presider brings in the crucifix and announces it as he approaches the Sanctuary: "Behold the wood of the cross on which hung the salvation of the world". All respond: "Come let us adore". As the cross is placed on its place near the altar, the priest venerates it with all the serving ministers. Then all the faithful will venerate the cross. Finally, the priest goes to the altar of Repose to bring the Holy Communion followed with the Lord's Prayers. There is no kiss of peace. After receiving the Holy Communion, the priest will pray over the people and all depart in silence.