

The Living Word

Good Friday – Celebration of the Passion of the Lord

First Reading Is 52:13 – 53:12

He surrendered himself to death, while bearing the faults of many.

See, my servant will prosper,
he shall be lifted up, exalted, rise to great heights.
As the crowds were appalled on seeing him
– so disfigured did he look
that he seemed no longer human –
so will the crowds be astonished at him,
and kings stand speechless before him;
for they shall see something never told
and witness something never heard before:
‘Who could believe what we have heard,
and to whom has the power of the Lord been
revealed?’

Like a sapling he grew up in front of us,
like a root in arid ground.
Without beauty, without majesty (we saw him),
no looks to attract our eyes;
a thing despised and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering,
a man to make people screen their faces;
he was despised and we took no account of him.
And yet ours were the sufferings he bore,
ours the sorrows he carried.
But we, we thought of him as someone punished,
struck by God, and brought low.
Yet he was pierced through for our faults,
crushed for our sins.

On him lies a punishment that brings us peace,
and through his wounds we are healed.
We had all gone astray like sheep,
each taking his own way,
and the Lord burdened him
with the sins of all of us.
Harshly dealt with, he bore it humbly,
he never opened his mouth,
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter-house,
like a sheep that is dumb before its shearers
never opening its mouth.

By force and by law he was taken;
would anyone plead his cause?
Yes, he was torn away from the land of the living;
for our faults struck down in death.

They gave him a grave with the wicked,
a tomb with the rich,
though he had done no wrong
and there had been no perjury in his mouth.
The Lord has been pleased to crush him with
suffering.

If he offers his life in atonement,
he shall see his heirs, he shall have a long life
and through him what the Lord wishes will be done.
His soul's anguish over
he shall see the light and be content.
By his sufferings shall my servant justify many,
taking their faults on himself.

Hence I will grant whole hordes for his tribute,
he shall divide the spoil with the mighty,
for surrendering himself to death
and letting himself be taken for a sinner,
while he was bearing the faults of many
and praying all the time for sinners.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 30:2. 6. 12-13. 15-17. 25. R. Lk 23:46

(R.) Father, I put my life in your hands.

1. In you, O Lord, I take refuge.
Let me never be put to shame.
In your justice, set me free.
Into your hands I commend my spirit.
It is you who will redeem me, Lord. (R.)
2. In the face of all my foes
I am a reproach,
an object of scorn to my neighbours
and of fear to my friends. (R.)
3. Those who see me in the street
run far away from me.
I am like a dead man, forgotten in men's hearts,
like a thing thrown away. (R.)
4. But as for me, I trust in you, Lord,
I say: 'You are my God.'
My life is in your hands, deliver me
from the hands of those who hate me. (R.)
5. Let your face shine on your servant.
Save me in your love.
Be strong, let your heart take courage,
all who hope in the Lord. (R.)

Second Reading Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9

He learned obedience and became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

Since in Jesus, the Son of God, we have the supreme high priest who has gone through to the highest heaven, we must never let go of the faith that we have professed. For it is not as if we had a high priest who was incapable of feeling our weaknesses with us; but we have one who has been tempted in every way that we are, though he is without sin. Let us be confident, then, in approaching the throne of grace, that we shall have mercy from him and find grace when we are in need of help.

During his life on earth, he offered up prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears, to the one who had the power to save him out of death, and he submitted so humbly that his prayer was heard. Although he was Son, he learnt to obey him through suffering; but having been made perfect, he became for all who obey the source of eternal salvation.

sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. Seeing his mother and the disciple he loved standing near her, Jesus said to his mother,

J Woman, this is your son.

N Then to the disciple he said,

J This is your mother.

N And from that moment the disciple made a place for her in his home.

After this, Jesus knew that everything had now been completed, and to fulfil the scripture perfectly he said:

J I am thirsty.

N A jar full of vinegar stood there, so putting a sponge soaked in vinegar on a hyssop stick they held it up to his mouth. After Jesus had taken the vinegar he said,

J It is accomplished;

N and bowing his head he gave up the spirit.

All kneel and pause a moment.

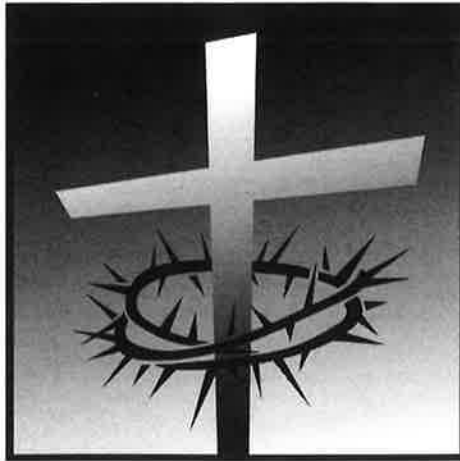
N It was Preparation Day, and to prevent the bodies remaining on the cross during the sabbath – since that sabbath was a day of special solemnity – the Jews asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken away. Consequently the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with him and then of the other. When they came to Jesus, they found that he was already dead, and so instead of breaking his legs one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; and immediately there came out blood and water. This is the evidence of one who saw it – trustworthy evidence, and he knows he speaks the truth – and he gives it so that you may believe as well. Because all this happened to fulfil the words of scripture:

Not one bone of his will be broken,

and again, in another place scripture says:

They will look on the one whom they have pierced.

After this, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus – though a secret one because he was afraid of the Jews – asked Pilate to let him remove the body of Jesus. Pilate gave permission, so they came and took it away. Nicodemus came as well – the same one who had first come to Jesus at night-time – and he brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, following the Jewish burial custom. At 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. Since it was the Jewish Day of Preparation and the tomb was near at hand, they laid Jesus there.



Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

Strange term, “Good Friday”. A tortured body hanging on a cross? The upright beam grounded in the earth. Might something “good” come of that? The horizontal beam stretched east to west. Might something “good” come of that? At the top the plaque. At the bottom the spattering of blood and water. Might something “good” come of that?

Yes, because that cross bore the body of Jesus Nazarene, King of the Jews, but, more than that, the Lord of the Universe, Son of God. Because it held *His* body, the upright beam grounded in the earth, reaching heavenward, joined heaven and earth, making this Friday *GoodFriday*.

Because *His* arms were stretched out on the horizontal beam the whole of humankind, the whole of creation was embraced. And that makes this Friday, *GoodFriday*.

Because *His* water and blood, signs accompanying birth, spattered the foot of the cross, a new family, of whom we are the descendants, was born.

We could pause for a moment, admitting that we may never understand fully, but resolving to fully stand under the Cross, proclaiming that this was indeed the *BestFriday*.

mtate@bigpond.com

The psalm responses are from the English translation of the Lectionary for the Mass ©1981 International Committee on English in the Liturgy Inc.(ICEL). All rights reserved. The psalm texts, from *The Psalms, A New Translation*, ©1963 by The Grail, England and used by permission of the publishers. The scriptural quotations are taken from the Jerusalem Bible, published and copyright 1966, 1967 and 1968 by Darton Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co Inc, and used by permission of the publishers.

© Creative Ministries Resources Pty Ltd
All use must be in accordance with your user licensing agreement.