

GOOD FRIDAY



The world is in need of healing. It is not just from the corona virus that it needs to be healed, but almost every aspect of human life is in need of treatment. It is the disaster like development the of COVID19 that compelled the world to go on a retreat and look at international relations, employment, care for the poor, helping the lonely, sharing of riches, the way of socialising and to reorganise many aspects of it. At the end there will be a new world born out of the goodness of humanity. That is how God has designed humanity. If you can see the design of God unfolding in all of these, you will remain as people of greater hope.

On this Good Friday, in the passion narrative of John, we are invited to meditate on the fact that humanity is blessed with the love of God. Death perhaps is the worst of the threats to life. With thinking that everything ends with death comes a sense utter hopelessness. John shows how the death of Jesus was different. It was the completion of a salvation plan unfolding according to the Scriptures. If you too organise your life according to the Word of God, all that happens in your life also will be according to a divine plan. Then the end of your earthly pilgrimage becomes a satisfying completion of a plan of God in you. Jesus has conquered death. On the Cross, before breathing his last, Jesus said, "*It is finished*", meaning the plan of God is accomplished in my life. Good Friday prayers remind us of this victory of Jesus over death.

While the Jews sacrificed lambs in the Temple, Jesus sacrificed his own body on the cross. Therefore joining in the sacrifice of Jesus in a meaningful way our life also becomes emblematic of God's love. In the dreadful COVID19 situation many doctors, nurses and other health professionals have become emblematic of the love for humanity. In every dreadful situation, you have an opportunity to present the love of the Father in Heaven.

A new life is preceded with a birth pang. The suffering of Jesus was the birth pang of the new creation in his resurrection. When you look at the trials and tribulations of your life through the prism of the Passion of Jesus, you too will be able to see how even the worst of your suffering is the prelude of a wonderful new life God wants to gift you with.

As a Christian when you join your sufferings to the Passion of the Lord, you will be addressing all ridicules aimed at you, rifts and brokenness with others differently. Your meditation on the Passion of the Lord and ability to see God's plan in your life will help you heal the wounds in your life. Jesus in his passion has shown himself as our healer in our brokenness. It is not for nothing that as we meditate on the sufferings of Jesus, we call this day Good Friday.

*God so loved the world
that He gave
His only begotten son.*

First Reading

Is 52:13-43:12

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.

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**

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**

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**

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**

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. me. **R**

Second Reading

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

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.

Gospel Acclamation

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
 Christ became obedient for us even to death,
 dying on the cross.
 Therefore God raised him on high
 and gave him a name above all other names.
 Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Gospel
Jn 13:1-15

The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

N Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kedron valley. There was a garden there, and he went into it with his disciples. Judas the traitor knew the place well, since Jesus had often met his disciples there, and he brought the cohort to this place together with a detachment of guards sent by the chief priests and the Pharisees, all with lanterns and torches and weapons. Knowing everything that was going to happen to him, Jesus then came forward and said,

J Who are you looking for?

N They answered,

C Jesus the Nazarene.

N He said,

J I am he.

N Now Judas the traitor was standing among them. When Jesus said, 'I am he', they moved back and fell to the ground. He asked them a second time,

J Who are you looking for?

N They said,

C Jesus the Nazarene.

N Jesus replied,

J I have told you that I am he. If I am the one you are looking for, let these others go.

N This was to fulfil the words he had spoken: 'Not one of those you gave me have I lost.'

Simon Peter, who carried a sword, drew it and wounded the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter,

J Put your sword back in its scabbard; am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?

N The cohort and its captain and the Jewish guards seized Jesus and bound him. They took him first to Annas, because Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. It was Caiaphas who had suggested to the Jews, 'It is better for one man to die for the people.'

Simon Peter, with another disciple, followed Jesus. This disciple, who was known to the high priest, went with Jesus into the high priest's palace, but Peter stayed outside the door. So the other disciple, the one known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who was keeping the door, and brought Peter in. The maid on duty at the door said to Peter,

O Aren't you another of that man's disciples?

N He answered,

O I am not.

N Now it was cold, and the servants and guards had lit a charcoal fire and were standing there warming themselves; so Peter stood there too, warming himself with the others.

The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus answered,

J I have spoken openly for all the world to hear; I have always taught in the synagogue and in the Temple where all the Jews meet together: I have said nothing in secret. But why ask me? Ask my hearers what I taught: they know what I said.

N At these words, one of the guards standing by gave Jesus a slap in the face, saying,

O Is that the way to answer the high priest?

N Jesus replied,

J If there is something wrong in what I said, point it out; but if there is no offence in it, why do you strike me?

N Then Annas sent him, still bound, to Caiaphas, the high priest.

As Simon Peter stood there warming himself, someone said to him,

O Aren't you another of his disciples?

N He denied it saying,

O I am not.

N One of the high priest's servants, a relation of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said,

O Didn't I see you in the garden with him?

N Again Peter denied it; and at once a cock crew.

They then led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the Praetorium. It was now morning. They did not go into the Praetorium themselves or they would be defiled and unable to eat the passover. So Pilate came outside to them and said,

O What charge do you bring against this man?

N They replied,

C If he were not a criminal, we should not be handing him over to you.

N Pilate said,

O Take him yourselves, and try him by your own Law.

N The Jews answered,

C We are not allowed to put a man to death.

N This was to fulfil the words Jesus had spoken indicating the way he was going to die.

So Pilate went back into the Praetorium and called Jesus to him, and asked,

O Are you the king of the Jews?

N Jesus replied,

J Do you ask this of your own accord, or have others spoken to you about me?

N Pilate answered,

O Am I a Jew? It is your own people and the chief priests who have handed you over to me: what have you done?

N Jesus replied,

J Mine is not a kingdom of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, my men would have fought to prevent me being surrendered to the Jews. But my kingdom is not of this kind.

N Pilate said,

O So you are a king then?

N Jesus answered,

J It is you who say it. Yes, I am a king, I was born for this, I came into the world for this; to bear witness to the truth, and all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice.

N Pilate said,

O Truth? What is that?

N And with that he went out again to the Jews and said,

O I find no case against him. But according to a custom of yours, I should release one prisoner at the **Passover**; would you like me, then, to release the king of the Jews?

N At this they shouted:

C Not this man, but **Barabbas**.

N **Barabbas** was a brigand.

Pilate then had Jesus taken away and scourged; and after this, the soldiers twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on his head, and dressed him in a purple robe.

They kept coming up to him and saying,

C Hail, king of the Jews!

N and they slapped him in the face.

Pilate came outside again and said to them,

O Look, I am going to bring him out to you to let you see that I find no case.

N Jesus then came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said,

O Here is the man.

N When they saw him the chief priests and the guards shouted,

C Crucify him! Crucify him!

N Pilate said,

O Take him yourselves and crucify him: I can find no case against him.

N The Jews replied,

C We have a Law, and according to the Law he ought to die, because he has claimed to be the son of God.

N When Pilate heard them say this his fears increased. Re-entering the Praetorium, he said to Jesus,

O Where do you come from?

N But Jesus made no answer. Pilate then said to him,

O Are you refusing to speak to me? Surely you know I have power to release you and I have power to crucify you?

N Jesus replied

J You would have no power over me if it had not been given you from above; that is why the one who handed me over to you has the greater guilt.

N From that moment Pilate was anxious to set him free, but the Jews shouted,

C If you set him free you are no friend of **Caesar's**; anyone who makes himself king is defying **Caesar**.

N Hearing these words, Pilate had Jesus brought out, and seated himself on the chair of judgement at a place called the Pavement, in Hebrew **Gabbatha**. It was **Passover** Preparation Day, about the sixth hour. Pilate said to the Jews,

O Here is your king.

N They said,

C Take him away, take him away. Crucify him!

N Pilate said,

O Do you want me to crucify your king?

N The chief priests answered,

C We have no king except **Caesar**.

N So in the end Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

They then took charge of Jesus, and carrying his own cross he went out of the city to the place of the skull, or, as it was called in Hebrew, **Golgotha**, where they crucified him with two others, one on either side with Jesus in the middle. Pilate wrote out a notice and had it fixed to the cross; it ran: 'Jesus the **Nazarene**, King of the Jews.' This notice was read by many of the Jews, because the place where Jesus was crucified was not far from the city, and the writing was in Hebrew, Latin and Greek.

So the Jewish chief priests said to Pilate,
C You should not write 'King of the Jews', but 'This man said: I am King of the Jews'.

N Pilate answered,

O What I have written, I have written.

N When the soldiers had finished crucifying Jesus they took his clothing and divided it into four shares, one for each soldier. His undergarment was seamless, woven in one piece from neck to hem; so they said to one another,

C Instead of tearing it, let's throw dice to decide who is to have it.

N In this way the words of scripture were fulfilled:

They shared out my clothing among them.
They cast lots for my clothes.

This is exactly what the soldiers did.

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother and his mother's 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 Arimathaea, 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.

REFLECTIONS ON JOHN 18:1 - 19:42

Scriptural context – The Suffering Servant

It is appropriate that the first reading in today's liturgy comes from one of Isaiah's Songs of the Suffering Servant. Isaiah includes three short poems or songs about the Suffering Servant and then a much longer fourth song from which today's reading comes. Traditionally, Jewish scholars interpreted Isaiah's poems as referring to the Jewish people as a whole. The followers of Jesus made a specific link between the imagery of Isaiah and the life and death of Jesus. The writings of Isaiah had a significant influence on the gospel writers who borrowed heavily from his imagery throughout their gospels.

Historical Context – Jews in the fourth gospel

The gospel of John is sometimes considered 'anti-Semitic' because its portrayal of 'the Jews' is rather negative. Use of the term 'the Jews' is very evident in today's Passion narrative where other writers might have used 'the Jewish authorities'. This gospel was written at a time when the Christian community had been exiled from the Jewish faith and what had once been close bonds were dramatically broken down. The language of the gospel is indicative of the social situation at the time of its writing rather than at the time of Jesus. We must be careful to understand the context of the writer.

Have you thought? – Veneration of the Cross

A significant element of the Good Friday service is the veneration of the Cross when all are invited to process forward and touch or kiss the Cross that is the central symbol of Good Friday. Veneration of holy objects and places is an ancient practice that draws people into connection with the mystery and history of the thing they venerate. In more recent years, the veneration of the Cross has taken on a new significance as the World Youth Day Cross and Icon travel around the world and around the host country of WYD. The act of veneration invites us into a moment of deep prayer.

The power of Christ's blood

Saint John Chrysostom (AD 349-407)

If we wish to understand the power of Christ's blood, we should go back to the ancient account of its prefiguration in Egypt. "*Sacrifice a lamb without blemish,*" commanded Moses, "*and sprinkle its blood on your doors.*" If we were to ask him what he meant, and how the blood of an irrational beast could possibly save men endowed with reason, his answer would be that the saving power lies not in the blood itself, but in the fact that it is a sign of the Lord's blood. In those days, when the destroying angel saw the blood on the doors he did not dare to enter, so how much less will the devil approach now when he sees, not that figurative blood on the doors, but the true blood on the lips of believers, the doors of the temple of Christ.

If you desire further proof of the power of this blood, remember where it came from, how it ran down from the cross, flowing from the Master's side. The gospel records that when Christ was dead, but still hung on the cross, a soldier came and pierced his side with a lance and immediately there poured out water and blood. Now the water was a symbol of baptism and the blood, of the holy Eucharist. The soldier pierced the Lord's side, he breached the wall of the sacred temple, and I have found the treasure and made it my own. So also with the lamb: the Jews sacrificed the victim and I have been saved by it.

"There flowed from his side water and blood." Beloved, do not pass over this mystery without thought; it has yet another hidden meaning, which I will explain to you. I said that water and blood symbolised baptism and the holy Eucharist. From these two sacraments the Church is born: from baptism, "*the cleansing water that gives rebirth and renewal through the Holy Spirit,*" and from the holy Eucharist. Since the symbols of baptism and the Eucharist flowed from his side, it was from his side that Christ fashioned the Church, as he had fashioned Eve from the side of Adam. Moses gives a hint of this when he tells the story of the first man and makes him exclaim: "Bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh!" As God then took a rib from Adam's side to fashion a woman, so Christ has given us blood and water from his side to fashion the Church. God took the rib when Adam was in a deep sleep, and in the same way Christ gave us the blood and the water after his own death.

Do you understand, then, how Christ has united his bride to himself and what food he gives us all to eat? By one and the same food we are both brought into being and nourished. As a woman nourishes her child with her own blood and milk, so does Christ unceasingly nourish with his own blood those to whom he himself has given life.

Parish Donation Page QR Code

Some parishioners were asking about donation to the Parish. You could drop your envelopes in the Parish mailbox as some do. If you would like to organise direct debit, please contact Lea in the Parish Office by emailing info@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au. Alternatively, you could use the **SUPPORT US** button found on the top right-hand corner of the Parish Website. You can also scan this QR code with your mobile device and it will direct you to our donation page. Thank you for your continued support.



Live Streaming of Liturgies

We will continue to live stream masses after Easter. Monday to Saturday at 8.00am and Sunday at 10.00am. Visit: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCedFcfdv_ILEHVNmQrpWeVA/videos.



Thank you for supporting Project Compassion 2020

Covid-19 is affecting all of us. In these challenging times, your kindness and solidarity can make a world of difference to the lives of the most vulnerable. Your support is life saving.

Do you have PC boxes and cash to hand in?

You may drop off your Project Compassion donations into the Parish Office Mailbox at any time.

Did you know that you can go online at [lent. Caritas.org.au](http://lent.caritas.org.au) and securely donate with your credit card or you can send a cheque to Caritas Australia, GPO Box 9830, Sydney, NSW 2001.

INTENTIONS for Fr Thomas to include in his Livestreamed Mass

Sick: Sr Tomsy

Recently Deceased: Fr Ray Farrell, Monica Smith,

Anniversary: Francisca Natividad

Deceased: Nellie Lim, Fr Mark Spora, Anavea & Pakalesio, Petelo F Sili, Malia Selek, Makalita Pongi

Deceased Members and Friends of: O'Dwyer & Erwin Families, Amores Families

Other Intentions: For all those affected by the Corona Virus. For the intention of the Holy Father.

Contact the Parish Office to include your intentions in the Mass by Fr Thomas.