

“The Way of The Cross”



5th Presentation

“Forever”

◆ Click HERE.

The Cross

- ◆ 619 “Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures” (1 Cor 15:3).
- ◆ 620 Our salvation flows from God’s initiative of love for us, because “he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins” (1 Jn 4:10). “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself” (2 Cor 5:19).
- ◆ 621 Jesus freely offered himself for our salvation. Beforehand, during the Last Supper, he both symbolized this offering and made it really present: “This is my body which is given for you” (Lk 22:19).

The Cross

- ◆ 622 The redemption won by Christ consists in this, that he came “to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mt 20:28), that is, he “loved [his own] to the end” (Jn 13:1), so that they might be “ransomed from the futile ways inherited from [their] fathers” (1 Pet 1:18).
- ◆ 623 By his loving obedience to the Father, “unto death, even death on a cross” (Phil 2:8), Jesus fulfills the atoning mission (cf. Isa 53:10) of the suffering Servant, who will “make many righteous; and he shall bear their iniquities” (Isa 53:11; cf. Rom 5:19).

Catholic Church. (2000). Catechism of the Catholic Church (2nd Ed., p. 161). Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.

The Mass & The Way of the Cross

- ◆ We are drawn into God's redeeming love in each celebration of the Eucharist.
- ◆ We "proclaim" the Paschal Mystery until He comes again.
- ◆ We are most Church when celebrating the Eucharist.
- ◆ Our lifeline....Future Wedding Feast of the Lamb
References in Revelation.

What This Means

- ◆ No more “eye for an eye.”
- ◆ We must follow in the Lord’s footsteps. (We must decrease He must increase)
- ◆ We must take the high road and not take the easy way out. Renewal doesn’t happen because people are often self-seeking and not seeking what is good and pleasing to God. (Imitation of Christ Book 3 Chapter 6)
- ◆ The 2nd coming will come only after a final trial that will “shake” the faith of many believers. Many will fall into “apostasy” as a false solution comes. (CCC 676)
- ◆ Pope Benedict’s Prophecy. (Lord of the Rings analogies & Cruise Ship Revelations)

Grace At Work Through Suffering

Suffering will never be completely absent from our lives. So don't be afraid of suffering. Your suffering is a great means of love, if you make use of it, especially if you offer it for peace in the world. Suffering in and of itself is useless, but suffering that is shared with the passion of Christ is a wonderful gift and a sign of love. Christ's suffering proved to be a gift, the greatest gift of love, because through his suffering our sins were atoned for.

Suffering, pain, and sorrow, humiliation, feelings of loneliness, are nothing but the kiss of Jesus, a sign that you have come so close that He can kiss you.

Remember that the passion of Christ ends always in the joy of the resurrection of Christ, so when you feel in your own heart the suffering of Christ, remember the resurrection has to come. Never let anything so fill you with sorrow as to make you forget the joy of Christ risen.

Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Suffering & Being For Others

This same connection between love of God and responsibility for others can be seen in a striking way in the life of Saint Augustine. After his conversion to the Christian faith, he decided, together with some like-minded friends, to lead a life totally dedicated to the word of God and to things eternal. His intention was to practice a Christian version of the ideal of the contemplative life expressed in the great tradition of Greek philosophy, choosing in this way the “better part” (cf. *Lk* 10:42). Things turned out differently, however. While attending the Sunday liturgy at the port city of Hippo, he was called out from the assembly by the Bishop and constrained to receive ordination for the exercise of the priestly ministry in that city. Looking back on that moment, he writes in his *Confessions*: “Terrified by my sins and the weight of my misery, I had resolved in my heart, and meditated flight into the wilderness; but you forbade me and gave me strength, by saying: ‘Christ died for all, that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who for their sake died’ (cf. 2 *Cor* 5:15)”. Christ died for all. To live for him means allowing oneself to be drawn into his *being for others*.

Spe Salvi #28

Embrace The Cross

JESUS has always many who love His heavenly kingdom, but few who bear His cross. He has many who desire consolation, but few who care for trial. He finds many to share His table, but few to take part in His fasting. All desire to be happy with Him; few wish to suffer anything for Him. Many follow Him to the breaking of bread, but few to the drinking of the chalice of His passion. Many revere His miracles; few approach the shame of the Cross. Many love Him as long as they encounter no hardship; many praise and bless Him as long as they receive some comfort from Him. But if Jesus hides Himself and leaves them for a while, they fall either into complaints or into deep dejection....continued

Embrace The Cross

Those, on the contrary, who love Him for His own sake and not for any comfort of their own, bless Him in all trial and anguish of heart as well as in the bliss of consolation. Even if He should never give them consolation, yet they would continue to praise Him and wish always to give Him thanks. What power there is in pure love for Jesus -- love that is free from all self-interest and self-love!

Do not those who always seek consolation deserve to be called mercenaries? Do not those who always think of their own profit and gain prove that they love themselves rather than Christ? Where can a man be found who desires to serve God for nothing? Rarely indeed is a man so spiritual as to strip himself of all things. And who shall find a man so truly poor in spirit as to be free from every creature? His value is like that of things brought from the most distant lands.

Imitation of Christ Book 2 Chapter 11

Achieving Maturity

The true measure of humanity is essentially determined in relationship to suffering and to the sufferer. This holds true both for the individual and for society. A society unable to accept its suffering members and incapable of helping to share their suffering and to bear it inwardly through “com-passion” is a cruel and inhuman society. Yet society cannot accept its suffering members and support them in their trials unless individuals are capable of doing so themselves; moreover, the individual cannot accept another's suffering unless he personally is able to find meaning in suffering, a path of purification and growth in maturity, a journey of hope. Indeed, to accept the “other” who suffers, means that I take up his suffering in such a way that it becomes mine also. Because it has now become a shared suffering, though, in which another person is present, this suffering is penetrated by the light of love.

Spe Salvi #38

Suffering & Compassion

To suffer with the other and for others; to suffer for the sake of truth and justice; to suffer out of love and in order to become a person who truly loves—these are fundamental elements of humanity, and to abandon them would destroy man himself. Yet once again the question arises: are we capable of this? Is the other important enough to warrant my becoming, on his account, a person who suffers? Does truth matter to me enough to make suffering worthwhile? Is the promise of love so great that it justifies the gift of myself? In the history of humanity, it was the Christian faith that had the particular merit of bringing forth within man a new and deeper capacity for these kinds of suffering that are decisive for his humanity. The Christian faith has shown us that truth, justice and love are not simply ideals, but enormously weighty realities. It has shown us that God — Truth and Love in person — desired to suffer for us and with us.

Spe Salvi #39

Focal Points

- ◆ Redemptive Suffering - uniting our suffering with Christ and allowing ourselves to be opened to greater love and generosity.
- ◆ The mystery of suffering. The great theological questions in Job. We don't know everything.
- ◆ The desire to be with others when they are not at their best and the power of such witness.

Focal Points

- ◆ Satan is trying to persuade us that if God really loves us He wouldn't allow such hardship and suffering. (Yes of Jesus Christ p.111)
- ◆ Satan tries to draw us away from the Cross by mocking us. (Power in weakness)
- ◆ Suffering purifies us and helps us to love with the love of Jesus.
- ◆ Jesus loves us when we are not at our best. We must do likewise with others. (Overcoming selfishness.)

Words of Encouragement

Don't allow anything to interfere with your love for Jesus. You belong to Him. Nothing can separate you from Him. That one sentence is important to remember. He will be your joy, your strength. If you hold onto that sentence, temptations and difficulties will come, but nothing will break you. Remember, you have been created for great things.

You must not be afraid to say "Yes" to Jesus, because there is no greater love than His love and no greater joy than His joy. My prayer for you is that you understand and have the courage to answer Jesus' call to you with the simple word, "Yes."

Saint Teresa of Calcutta