

4. April 2025

MEDITATIONS FOR LENT

“It is finished”

Jn 19:16-30

Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Gol'gotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the cross; it read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” Many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. The chief priests of the Jews then said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’” Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.” When the soldiers had crucified Jesus they took his garments and made four parts, one for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was without seam, woven from top to bottom; so they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.” This was to fulfil the scripture, “They parted my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.” So the soldiers did this. But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Mag'dalene. When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. After this Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfil the scripture), “I thirst.” A bowl full of vinegar stood there; so they put a sponge full of the vinegar on hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, “It is finished”; and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

With the cross on His shoulders, Jesus went to Calvary. Undoubtedly, at each step He looked to the Father and offered Him everything, being the Lamb of God who bore the sins of humanity.

In the Catholic tradition we know the meditation of the fourteen stations of the Cross. From next Sunday, also known as Passion Sunday, until Holy Saturday, we will dedicate our daily meditations to each of these stations, retracing the steps of our Saviour and

uniting ourselves more deeply with Him. We want to consciously offer these Stations of the Cross to the Lord as reparation for the Church's waywardness, which I have described in the last meditations, as well as for moral transgressions. We cordially invite you to join us in this intention during the Stations of the Cross that we will make in Jerusalem. We cannot overlook the fact that the Church herself is currently walking the Way of the Cross.

Jesus was crucified with two others. Pilate was not deterred by the Jews from calling Jesus 'King of the Jews' and inscribed this title in three languages on the cross. Thus, at least in the hours of His agony on the cross, Jesus was attested as King of the Jews.

The soldiers divided His garments. Not many of His disciples were with Him at the cross. But we know that the Mother of the Lord was there, sharing with Him those hours of suffering. She, who had long ago said "yes" to the Father's will and followed Her Son, remained with Him in that moment when darkness seemed to triumph. Also standing by the cross with Jesus were John and some faithful women. It must have torn their hearts apart to see Him in such agony. The Virgin Mary had been foretold by Simeon that a sword would pierce her soul (Lk 2:35).

It must have been a comfort to the Lord that these faithful souls who loved Him were with Him at His last hour. From the Cross, Jesus united His Mother and the disciple whom He loved: *"Woman, behold, your son!"* Then he said to the disciple, *"Behold, your mother!"*

Jesus knew that all was accomplished. He had walked His way to the end. Nothing could hinder Him from fulfilling His Father's will until death. As we will see in the Stations of the Cross, He rose again and again when He was about to collapse under the weight of humanity's sins.

We can never thank the Father and Jesus enough. The more deeply the Holy Spirit makes us understand the Lord's sacrifice, the greater will be our love and gratitude, and we will ask Him for the grace to remain faithful to Him to the end.

"It is finished" are the last words of the Lord in the Gospel of John. The sacrifice of love has been offered, incomparable and valid for all time. All that remains is for people to believe in the Lord and accept His sacrifice. In heaven, the glorious song of praise to the

Lamb of God, as described by St John in the Book of Revelation, resounds. May the people on earth join their voices to His glorification!

“Thou wast slain and by thy blood didst ransom men for God from every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and hast made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on earth.” Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein, saying, “To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!” And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped” (Rev 5:9-14).