

We are here today at the hour of Jesus' death, at the heart of the Triduum, at the darkest of hours....

And yet the terrible irony of all this is that we know that unless we go with Jesus all the way to the empty tomb, through the cross, we will not fully realize the glory, the mystery, the life given.

Maundy Thursday Good Friday Holy Saturday offer us time to make visible and palpable the grace which holds us here, comforts us in our discomfort, assures us in our sorrow and doubt.

Our witness is central and critical to our salvation and redemption.

The question then becomes less why but how...how are we to be in this holiest and saddest of times?

The Scriptures assigned this week and the Scripture which lines the walls of the stations of the cross cry out an answer...

We are to be suffering servants!

We are to live more fully into the identity into which were baptized.

we are to live like Jesus

Usually I am drawn to speak about the Passion narrative but today something different is calling. After all the Passion really invites silence and that is the way we will leave this sanctuary in a few moments.

God I believe has offered a new way to experience the meaning of Good Friday and that is through the suffering servant songs of Isaiah. They weave together the triduum and speak directly to the context of our sorrow, our disillusionment, and our hope.

Isaiah's suffering servant songs are often used as foretelling of Jesus and yet again to focus on the prophecy come true is limiting and keeps us outside ourselves.

If we use the poetry of the prophet to inhabit us then the prophecy might just include our lives of faith and our responsibility.

In short, we are called to be the suffering servants. We are called to the life which Jesus led, taught and embodied. We are called to wash each other's feet. We are called to protect the needy and vulnerable. We are called to be as children. We are called to sacrifice.

Suffering yes

Servant yes

Complete inversions of our secular expectations

Complete subversions of our secular power structures.

When sorrow and love flow mingled down as the hymn proclaims, never, never is such joy experienced.

Our Christian hope is realized at the bottom, on the ground, in the dark, in a tomb,

Our Christian hope is realized at the cross where suffering and torture and brutality are so ultimately also realized that they are wiped away. Love and Life and Light are now able to freely flow.

The suffering servant appears unexpectedly and often in distortions and contortions. The suffering servant does not shy away from oddity or bizarre or even ugly. The suffering servant knows deep within that this is the radical path to and through the cross toward eternal life.

So as you revere the cross and grieve the death of Jesus may you remember that hope in the life to come where there is no more sorrow, no more tears, no hurt or injustice, only love and grace upon grace upon grace.

Stay

Good Friday Meditation

Our ways of remembering Jesus' suffering, death and glorification in this Holy Week provides a sacramental and transformational means to the grace of divine love, which evil can never defeat. We pray to accept in these days our particular share in Jesus' suffering love, to be made ready to treat and receive the stigmatized as real human beings, that they, like us, may be made whole in the fullness of divine love which has defeated evil.