



Archbishop of Montreal

Homily

Friday, April 10, 2020

Good Friday (Jn 18:1-19:42)

They Look on the One Whom They Have Pierced

“They look on the one whom they have pierced.”

This is a prophetic message that we find in sacred scripture. Jesus himself will extend this by saying: “The Son of Man must be lifted up. Lifted up from the earth, the Son of Man will draw all people to himself.” Once lifted up from the earth, St. John wants us to be certain that we understand well what this is about.

When he is lifted up from the earth, this is to say when crucified. He speaks of the death that awaits him in Jerusalem.

Why does Jesus draw all people to himself from the cross? Because the love that lasts to the end, the infinite love of God, is poured out from the cross, through Jesus Christ crucified. This

love is of an astonishing strength. Death has its power, but the love of God is more powerful. The love of Jesus Christ is more powerful. Suffering has its power, but the love of Jesus Christ is more powerful. Hatred has its power, but the love of Jesus Christ is more powerful. Divisions have their power, but the love of Jesus Christ is more powerful.

On this Holy Friday, let us take the time to contemplate the crucified Christ. Let us take the time to gaze on Jesus on the cross.

Let us contemplate his love. The love that no one could stop, not by any suffering, not by any kind of death, not by any kind of hatred. It could not be stopped, as he died while loving us. Jesus died while loving us. He died while forgiving. He died while praying: “Into your hands I commend my spirit.” He died while loving us to the end, he loved us to the end.

At times we find it difficult to love, we find it difficult to forgive, we are afraid of getting sick. Perhaps we are afraid of the sick during this pandemic, because COVID-19 causes so many fears and worries. When we are afraid, others might say that being courageous is not to have fears.

But before the cross, we share our fears with Jesus Christ: “Lord, I am afraid! I offer you my fears. Lord, I am sick! I offer you my sickness. Lord, I have sinned! I offer you my sins.”

Jesus carries all on the cross, he carries it with the power of his love, his mercy, his salvation. Let us contemplate the crucified Christ.

At the foot of the cross, we will have a universal prayer that we will pray for the life of the world, for all of humanity, and at the same time for all our those who have been affected by COVID-19 anywhere in the world.

Thereafter, we will reveal the cross and take a moment to venerate the cross, to bow before the cross, to adore the cross, to adore the crucified Jesus Christ.

We will do this in silence. We will do this slowly, aware of the seriousness of the passion of Jesus Christ, and also aware of the seriousness in the life of the human family that is threatened in this pandemic. Jesus is stronger than any pandemic.

Let us ask for his mercy, let us call for his salvation. Let us entrust all to him. Lord, into your hands we commend our lives.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Christian Lépine". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross symbol at the beginning.

† Christian Lépine
Archbishop of Montreal