

Good Friday

On this solemn Good Friday, I just want to make three little points. First, notice again how Jesus responds to all the terrible things that happen to Him. He is betrayed, denied, rejected, abandoned, arrested, tried, condemned, hit, mocked, abused, tortured, and crucified, and yet how does He respond? He doesn't yell at anyone. He doesn't scream.

He doesn't blow up in anger.

He doesn't strike back.

He doesn't hurt anyone, and He doesn't cause the death of anyone.

Instead, Jesus responds with love, compassion, mercy, and forgiveness. It is this perfect nonviolent suffering love which redeems us and saves us and reveals to us that He is God.

Second, as His followers, we must practice that same perfect nonviolent, suffering love which Jesus displays on the cross.

In His suffering and death, Jesus teaches us -

not how to hate
not how to hurt, and
not how to destroy.

Instead He teaches us

how to live,
how to love,
how to pray,
how to serve,
how to forgive and how to die.

He teaches us -

not to inflict suffering on others,
but to be willing to undergo suffering for the sake of others
without the desire to retaliate;
not to put others on the cross
but to be willing to undergo the cross
with love for the sake of others.

Not to destroy but willing to build up
our community here at St. Paul's,
and willing to build up all communities for
or the sake of humanity.

Finally, we have to make the connections, to connect the Good Friday story to what is happening in our lives and in the world, to see that Christ continues to be crucified around the world, in the hungry and the victims of violence and war by the unjust systems of the world. Only the methods of death have changed. We don't nail people to wood anymore; instead, we try to convert the world to our way of thinking.

Christ tells us that what you do to the least of these, we do to Him. We cannot come to the altar and venerate the cross and at the same time support the violence and crucifixion of Christ today in the world. Instead, our journey in life is to stand with Christ in the crucified people of the world. To do what we can to stop the destruction of His created world, that He gave to us to care for until He returns.

Today I invite you to be with Jesus as he carries His cross.

To stand with Mary at the foot of the cross.

To let Jesus offer us His forgiveness and love.

To go to the tomb, to share his suffering and love.

To stand with the crucified people of the world, so that we can truly be Good Friday people, attentive to the crucified Christ in the world.

To become Easter people and share in the new life of his resurrection.

God Bless