



Holy Saturday Prayer Marist Brothers Center at Esopus

Letter from Fr. Champagnat:

My very dear brothers and all who claim the name of Mary,

The Cross ... reminds us constantly of the wonder and mystery of the redemption of men, of the limitless love God, has for us. It speaks to us at all times, "See, how greatly God has loved the world!"

Yes, Christ loved us even to the extent of washing away our sins in his blood; he loved us to the point of laying down his life for us. He loved us even to the extent of becoming "cursed" so that we might be blessed, wiping away the sentence of our guilt by his blood from the Cross.

The Cross cries out to us unceasingly: "(Brothers) you have been bought at great price - not by money were you saved but by Jesus: he shed his blood and sacrificed his life; he became your surety; for your sins he was wounded, by his bruises you are healed.

The Cross is a book where all ... may read
of the love of God for us,
of the enormity of sin,
what it cost Jesus to expiate it,
of the worth of the human soul,
of the gratitude and love we owe Jesus,
our Savior, and Redeemer.

Remain at the foot of the Cross, meditate on the sufferings of our Lord, penetrate into the depths of his adorable heart, question what he has done for you ... how much he has loved you ... what he expects of you.

Give Christ your heart whole and entire ... love God alone ... resist the lure of sin and make an act of love to God ... think of him frequently, keep fresh the memory of what he has done for us ... to love Christ is to have but one ambition, one passion, that of making Jesus known and loved, and devoting of all your strength and talents to this end.

Song: Christ Be Our Light (Easter Vigil Version)

1. This is the night of new beginnings.
This is the night when heaven meets earth.
This is the night filled with God's glory
promise of our new birth.

Refrain: Christ be our light!
Shine in our hearts
Shine through the darkness.
Christ be our light!
Shine in your Church
Gathered today!

2. This is the night Christ our redeemer
rose from the grave triumphant and free
leaving the tomb of evil and darkness
empty tomb for all to see
3. Now will the fire kindled in darkness
burn to dispel the shadows of night
star of the mourning Jesus our savior
you are the worlds true light.
4. Sing of the hope deeper than dying.
Sing of the power stronger than death.
Sing of the love endless and heaven
drawing throughout the earth.
5. Into this world morning is breaking.
All of God's people light up your voice
cry out with joy tell out the story
all of the earth rejoice.

Taize Chant: Veni, Sancte, Spiritus

Reading from Jose A. Pagola:

The early Christians probably didn't know exactly what words or worries Jesus might have murmured on the cross. No one was close enough to hear them. They knew that he had prayed to God, and also that he had cried out strongly near the end. Not much more than that.

As he died, the Gospels tell us, he "cried out with a loud voice". This last, inarticulate cry is the most historically certain memory in the tradition. The Christians never forgot it.

The cry quoted by Mark – "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?", that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" – is the oldest in the Christian tradition and may well have come from Jesus. There is amazing sincerity in these words, spoken in Aramaic, Jesus'

mother tongue, in the midst of his loneliness and total abandonment. If he hadn't spoken them, would anyone in the Christian community have dared put them in his mouth?

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Jesus is totally alone at his death. He has been condemned by the temple authorities. The people have not come to his defense. His followers have fled. Around him he can only hear mockery and scorn.

In spite of his cries to the father in Gethsemane, God does not come to help him. His beloved father has left him alone to face in a ignominious death, Why? Jesus is not calling God by his usual name Abba, Father. He calls him Eloi, "my God", as any human being would. Yet his prayer is still an expression of trust: my God!

God is still his God in spite of everything. His complaint is about God's silence: where is he? Why doesn't he say something? Why has God forsaken him just when he needs him most?

Jesus dies in the dark of night. He doesn't enter his death enlightened by sublime vision. He dies with "Why?" on his lips. Now it is all in the hands of the Father.

**Taize Chants: Jesus remember me,
when you come into your Kingdom**

**Stay with me, remain here with me
Watch and pray, watch and pray.**

Reading from the Gospel of John:

I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

**Taize Chant: Ubi caritas et amor
Ubi caritas Deus ibi est**

**Prayer Around the Cross
(Instrumental Meditation Music)**

Intentions Response Chant:
**O Lord, hear my prayer,
O Lord, hear my prayer;
when I call answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer,
O Lord hear my prayer;
come and listen to me.**

**Closing: MAGNIFICAT OF GRIEF
by Ann Johnson**

I come to you, Adonai because you wait for me.
I know that at daybreak you will listen to my voice
and at dawn I will hold myself in readiness for you,
because you are the one I have relied on.

Yes, from this day forward I am alone,
and all generations will call me the one who sorrows,
for the Almighty has asked great things from me.

I do not understand the way of the Holy One.
Your mercy seems far away
and present only in the memory of our people.

I am brought low by the power of this moment.
My confidence in you,
my sureness of what is just, is confounded.

You have allowed my beloved to die.
My mind and my spirit are hungry
for the nourishment that only the presence
of my lost love could give.

Listen to my cry for help, my hope and my God.
Remember how you have loved me
- according to the promises you made
in that simple love-filled stable room so long ago –
remember how you have loved me
and touch me again.

Salve

