



The gift of Christ's death

Good Friday Memorial of the Lord's Passion

Prepare: Read John 18:1--19:42

Over the centuries since his death and resurrection, Jesus has revealed to mystics that those who meditate on his Passion are very dear to him. St. Augustine wrote that "there is no more profitable occupation for the soul than to meditate daily on the Passion of Our Lord."

The crucifixes we see today are cleaned-up versions of the horrible torture Our Lord suffered out of love for us. Today, meditate on this love, this tremendous love. He willingly subjected himself to intense pains because HE LOVES YOU and he knew it would do much good for you.

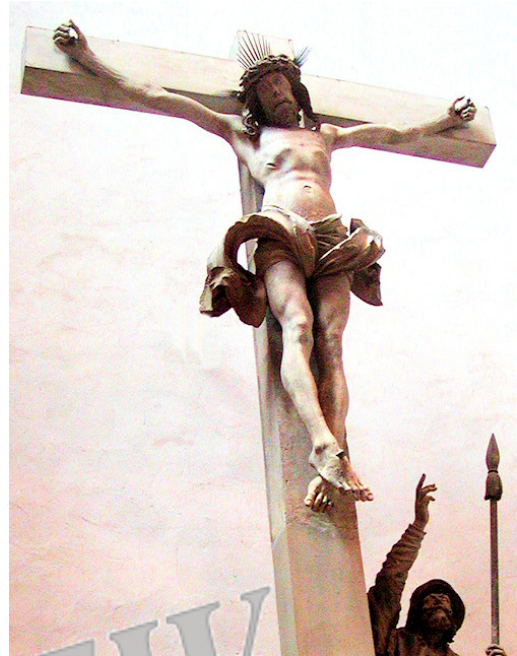
This is a tremendous gift that Jesus has given to you and to me and to everyone who accepts it. Read today's Gospel passage with the realization that every moment of pain he suffered was offered for your benefit so that your sins would not destroy you.

That's how important you are to God! That's how much he cares!

Looking at Jesus on the Cross should cure any low self-esteem we have, because it shows how highly he esteems us. Since he has done this for you, will he not also do everything else besides, if it's truly good for you?

What sufferings have caused you to doubt yourself, or to think unkindly about yourself, or to feel poorly about yourself? Take them to the Cross. Imagine giving them to a soldier. Now, watch him nail them into the hands and feet of your beloved Savior.

Let these wounds die with Jesus; no matter how badly they have hurt you, he has already taken the brunt of the beatings for you.



In the Good Friday services of the Catholic Church, we venerate the Cross by kissing it. Let your kiss be a gift of "thank you" to Jesus.

Then rest in the silence of the tomb with Jesus on Holy Saturday. Rest in the truth about how valuable you are to the Lord. On Easter Sunday, as we joyfully celebrate his resurrection, he has a glorious resurrection waiting for you!

Spend time with Jesus today giving him a list of all the ways you feel bad about yourself. List the people who've ridiculed you and insulted you. List the times you've felt worthless. List the reasons why you feel unlovable. List everything that gives you low self-esteem.

Then, while looking at a crucifix, meditate on the gift of sacrificial love that Jesus has given to you. Remember, he subjected himself to intense pains because HE LOVES YOU! He knew it would bring you into the kingdom of God where he wants to spend eternity with you!