

Liturgy Alive of Good Friday

Introduction by the Commentator

A. The Suffering Servant Wins

We are here to remember the passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He stands before us as the Man of Sorrows, insulted, tortured, disfigured, crushed, finally dying on a cross the death of a criminal. Yet, at the foot of the cross we are not lamenting a man whose life was a failure, for to us the cross is the sign of victory over sin and death. We believe that he is God's own Son risen from the dead and alive in our midst. This is not merely a story about the past, for the passion and death of Jesus is still going on in the people and the nations that suffer, in the poor, the hungry, in the victims of war, in all those crucified in any way. But we also believe that Christ rises today in Christians who struggle against sin and evil, in those who bring hope and joy to others. This is how we are one with our Lord today.

B. The Cry of All Those Crucified

Good Friday: good for us, but painful and humiliating for Jesus. In his suffering and death God seems to be reduced to silence. But today we do not weep over someone who died. We raise up our eyes to Jesus who died to give us life. His death means the victory of life over death, for we see Jesus' death in the light of his resurrection and the beginning of our risen life. Death is defeated. So, we raise our eyes to a Risen Lord. In Jesus' cry on the cross we hear the cry of all those who have been crucified in their lives, but also their hopes that they and we with Jesus will overcome all evil.

B. It Is Accomplished

Just before his death on the cross, Jesus says: "It is accomplished" or "It is fulfilled." What is accomplished? Accomplished and finished is his torture on the cross and his earthly life and task. Accomplished in him is the will of the Father and his work to bring forgiveness and life to people. All is accomplished as far as Jesus' mission on earth is concerned and we are assured that evil will never triumph again: The final victory belongs to God. But... Not yet accomplished is the kingdom of justice and love and compassion on earth. For that task is to be accomplished by us, the disciples of Jesus, who have to let the Spirit of Jesus accomplish that work in us and with us. As long as there are people who suffer from hunger and injustice, they add to what was lacking in the suffering of Jesus and we, the disciples, have to do away with these evils. This celebration of the Lord's Passion reminds us of this task, so that we can help people rise with him.

Opening Prayer

Let us pray to God the Lord
to make us new people
made in the image of his beloved Son
(SILENCE)

God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
your beloved Son became one of us,
like us in everything but sin,
when he was born from our flesh and blood.

By his suffering you save us
from the death we deserve
for being co-responsible for the evil of sin
in us and in the world.

May his suffering not be in vain,
but fill us with the life and grace
he has won for us on the cross
and help us to become like him, our Risen Lord
who lives and reigns with you for ever.

First Reading Introduction: Jesus Took Our Ills Upon Himself

Suffering is hard to take and will always remain a mystery. Yet it is through suffering that the Servant of God won his victory over evil and sin. Suffering is a part of life and a source of life, in us as well as in Jesus the Servant.

Second Reading Introduction: Jesus Felt And Made Up For Our Weakness

Jesus suffered for us to save us. Since his death and resurrection, everyone who suffers can unite one's pains to those of Jesus and share in his victory over evil.

Gospel Introduction: It Is Accomplished

John stood at the foot of the cross. He wants the world to know that Jesus is not merely a man who suffered and was put to death, but God's own Son who voluntarily offered his life for all so that we can become God's sons and daughters.

Note. For the passion, the invitation "The Lord be with you" is not said, nor at the end ["This is] the Gospel of the Lord."

Celebrant's Introduction to the Intercessions

Gathered at the foot of the cross, we will pray now for the great needs of the Church and of the world, for we remember today that Jesus gave his life that all might be saved and be gathered in his body, the Church.

Celebrant's Introduction to the Veneration Rite

We shall now venerate the Lord's cross. Strangely enough, to venerate the cross does not mean, even this Good Friday, to mourn the death of Jesus. It is true, we are sad and sorry that our sins caused his death; yet today we acclaim and kiss the cross as the sign of Jesus' victory over sin and death, and therefore the sign of our liberation. He rose from the dead and he is alive. Therefore we can rise and be alive to forgiveness and joy, and hope and life.

Introduction to the Communion Rite

Before us lies the broken body
of our Lord Jesus Christ.
He did not live for himself,
he did not die for himself.
He lived and died for us.
He invites us now to take and eat his body
in his memory, to share in his sufferings and death
and to rise with him to a deeper Christian life.
He also invites us to break bread for one another,
that is, like him, to live for one another.
We now pray with Jesus to our Father in heaven.

Deliver Us

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil
and grant us peace in our day.
In your mercy keep us free from sin
and renew with us your covenant
on account of the love
with which your suffering Servant
died for us on the cross today,
in the joyful hope of rising again
as our glorious Savior Jesus Christ.

Invitation to Communion

Thus says the Lord:
If the grain of wheat
does not fall on the ground
it remains a single grain,
but if it dies it yields fruit in abundance.

(RAISING THE HOST)

This is the body of our Lord
who died on the cross
to become for us the source of life.
Happy are we to be invited
to the supper of forgiveness and life.

Prayer after Communion

Lord God, merciful Father,
we thank you for loving us so much
that you gave your only Son Jesus Christ
to restore us to life

by his triumphant death and resurrection.
Continue giving us the strength
to win our struggles against sin and evil
and to bear our crosses in life
together with your Son.
Give us the firm faith
that you want us to live
and to render you always
faithful, dedicated service.
Help us to give ourselves to one another
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer Over the People

Lord God, Father of Jesus Christ,
bless your people gathered here before you.
May your Son's death for us not be in vain.
Send us home with the assurance
that our sins are forgiven,
that we can overcome evil
and that death is not the end.
Give us your risen Son
as our companion on the road of life,
to help us grow in your eternal life
and to bear witness to the world
that he lives among us
as our Lord for ever and ever. R/ Amen.