

GOOD FRIDAY

St. John 18:1-19:42

The altars are stripped bare, the statues are veiled in the colour of mourning, the Priest has prostrated himself on the ground, and the tabernacle stands empty. There is no joy today. Today, Good Friday, the second day of the sacred Triduum or three days, the second part of these three part drama, is the only day that bears the name "Good." Every other day of this week has been given the name "Holy" and next week each day is given the name "Easter." But only today is called "Good." But it is strange that the day on which we commemorate the death of our Lord we call "Good." It is part of the irony of the Catholic faith: that from death comes life. And today when we remember the death of our Lord we remember also that it was His death that destroyed death and that is "good."

These days of the Triduum are commemorated with a three day liturgy over many hours and they take time. But "taking time" is a mark of these three days. Our Lord sweet blood as He suffered in agony in the garden of Gethsemane the night before His death. He bore a heavy Cross through the streets of Jerusalem and up the hill of Calvary amidst the ridicule of the people. He hung upon the Cross, His body aching amidst its own weight as He had to haul himself up on the nails hammered through His hands and feet just to catch His breath. He hung there for three hours. Can we not give Him even a part of this time today? Is He worthy enough of our time?

Soon I will unveil the Cross and we will, in turn, venerate that symbol of our salvation. On that Cross hung a man the world said was worthless, without value or meaning. And the Cross which I will unveil today and which we will kiss was also, once, considered worthless and without significance. Years ago it was found lying in a garage, battered and broken. It had no meaning, no value

—something to be thrown away. But someone saw the value of that broken Cross and saved it. That Cross was restored and it was raised to new life. It is that Cross which we adore today.

In adoring that Cross, when you come forward to kiss it, remember that this once broken Cross is a symbol of that once broken man but in whose death we have been granted our eternal life.