



Archdiocese of San Antonio
Most Rev. Gustavo García-Siller



Good Friday
April 18, 2014

Here in San Antonio and throughout South Texas, Good Friday is one of the most solemn feasts of the liturgical year. Many of us walked along the Via Dolorosa this morning and experienced a devout re-enactment of Jesus' passion, crucifixion, and death. Many have also meditated on the seven last words of Jesus on the cross. We have just heard the Passion Narrative of John's Gospel. This evening many of us will gather for the *Pesamé*, accompanying Our Lady of Sorrows and the broken body of her beloved Son.

The child in us asks the perennial question: Why? Why did Jesus suffer so much? Why did he speak the Seven Last Words? Why did he have to die such a horrible death? Why, why, why?

The Servant of Lord suffered so terribly that those who saw him were appalled. The brutal suffering of this innocent person drives us to profound silence. We learn that the Servant did not submit to affliction with weak resignation. He made a brave choice to participate with God in an act aimed at breaking the stranglehold that sin had maintained over the human family for countless ages. He shows us a love that has no bounds because its source is in God.

The Letter to the Hebrews describes Jesus as a great high priest who is able to "sympathize with our weakness, one who has been similarly tested in every way, yet without sin." Jesus was obedient to his Father's will, even to death on a cross. But look at Jesus in John's Gospel with God's eyes: He is a king, a shepherd, – compassionate, sympathetic to human weakness, in solidarity with suffering people. His cross is his

throne; his crown one of thorns. Look closely with the eyes of faith and you will see a God who stoops down from heaven to bear our griefs and carry our sorrows!

The holiness of this day and the brilliant light of God's love and life shine on us through the Cross. Yes, Jesus prays tearful tears – at Gethsemane, during in his passion, and on the cross. But he does not despair, lose faith, and sin. He is not only compassionate towards us sinners, but he reminds us that we are God's very own children. Jesus takes us by the hand and leads us home! That is why we stand at the foot of the Cross today with his sorrowful Mother and thank God for his enduring love for us.

If we ask **why** God loves us so much, we enter more deeply into the mystery of God. Why does he love us? Simply because he does!