

Good Friday

April 10

We stand at the foot of the cross with the mother of Jesus and the beloved disciple. Other disciples may stand on a far off hill, observing the crucifixion from a safe distance. But we stand directly below the suffering and dying Lord. It is a very painful place to be. We can see the spasms of his stretched out body, the streams of blood flowing down to the earth. We can hear his last words, perhaps barely audible but unmistakable in their intent. It is soul-wrenching to stand at the foot of the cross.

However, we also know that Jesus understands our suffering, our pain, our sense of abandonment. With the eyes of faith, we see the New Adam and the New Eve. Unlike the first man and woman in the Garden of Eden, who said No! to God by eating of the forbidden fruit, the New Man and the New Woman have said Yes! to God -- at the Annunciation, in the Garden of Gethsemane, hanging on and standing before the Cross. Pope Francis tells us that by Jesus' cross "we have been redeemed. We have hope. By his cross we have been healed and embraced so that nothing and no one can separate us from his redeeming love. In the midst of isolation, when we are suffering from a lack of tenderness and chances to meet up," the crucified and risen Lord is living by our side. The Holy Father says: the Lord asks us from his cross to rediscover the life that awaits us, to look towards those who look to us, to strengthen, recognize, and foster the grace that lives within us. Let us not quench the wavering flame [of the Suffering Servant] that never falters, and let us allow hope to be rekindled. . .

Embracing the cross means finding the courage to embrace all the hardships of the present time, abandoning for a moment our eagerness for power and possessions in order to make room for the creativity that only the Spirit is capable of inspiring. It means finding the courage to create spaces where everyone can recognize that they are called, and to allow new forms of hospitality, fraternity, and solidarity. Embracing the Lord in order to embrace hope is the strength of faith that frees us from fear and gives us hope.

At the Cross, we see God's unconditional, enduring love for us and we pray: Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth at it is in heaven!" Our Lady, teach us to say Yes to God's will.