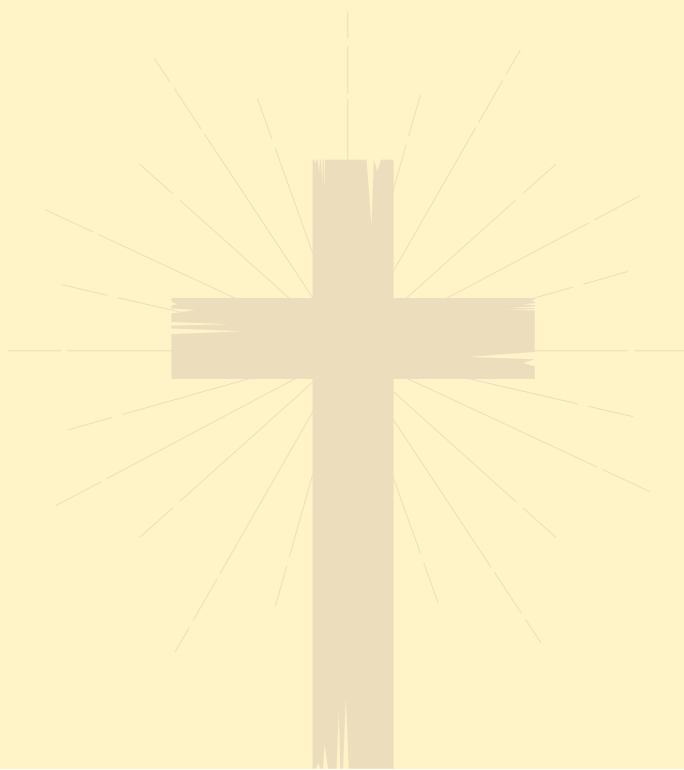


PALM SUNDAY, 10 APRIL 2022

From a Life of Disharmony to Harmony with God



Message of *Laudato Si'*

Jesus lived in full harmony with creation, and others were amazed: "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?" (*Mt* 8:27)....

In the Christian understanding of the world, the destiny of all creation is bound up with the mystery of Christ, present from the beginning: "All things have been created through him and for him" (*Col* 1:16). The prologue of the Gospel of John (1:1-18) reveals Christ's creative work as the Divine Word (*Logos*). But then, unexpectedly, the prologue goes on to say that this same Word "became flesh" (*Jn* 1:14). One Person of the Trinity entered into the created cosmos, throwing in his lot with it, even to the cross.

Laudato Si' #98 - #99

Take time to consider the gift of faith. Take time to reflect on the beauty of faith. Take time to appreciate that faith opens and activates our life to this dynamic relationship with the mystery of God. Our encounter with Jesus is real and dynamic. The ongoing encounter with the person of Jesus through the Holy Spirit continues to shape and transform us. Our life is always fresh and hope-filled in our continual encounter with God, who, for us, is Beauty, ever ancient and ever new. Let nothing break this harmony between God and us.

GOSPEL – LUKE 23:34 - 47

Passion Reading - selected section

When they reached the place called The Skull, they crucified him there and the two criminals also, one on the right, the other on the left.

Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing'. Then they cast lots to share out his clothing.

The crucified Christ is mocked

The people stayed there watching him. As for the leaders, they jeered at him. 'He saved others,' they said 'let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.' The soldiers mocked him too, and when they approached to offer vinegar they said, 'If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself'. Above him there was an inscription: 'This is the King of the Jews'.

The good thief

One of the criminals hanging there abused him. 'Are you not the Christ?' he said. 'Save yourself and us as well.' But the other spoke up and rebuked him. 'Have you no fear of God at all?' he said. 'You got the same sentence as he did, but in our case we deserved it: we are paying for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus,' he said 'remember me when you come into your kingdom.' 'Indeed, I promise you,' he replied 'today you will be with me in paradise.'

The death of Jesus

It was now about the sixth hour and, with the sun eclipsed, a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. The veil of the Temple was torn right down the middle; and when Jesus

had cried out in a loud voice, he said, 'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit' With these words he breathed his last.

After the death

When the centurion saw what had taken place, he gave praise to God and said, 'This was a great and good man.'

REFLECTION

Who do we identify with in the passion account of the gospel? Some spiritual writers ask us to consider that instead of the good thief or the centurion, we may be people who joined the crowd in shouting, "Crucify him, crucify him...!" This is because a part of us may tend to pettily be overly concerned about what other people are doing in a way that creates disharmony.

The proper focus of our Lenten observance is not other people but ourselves. It is essentially about our ongoing conversion experience. This is because our "YES" to Jesus is not a one-time thing. It is a YES that takes place with the context of us living out our lives. Along the way, we may have gotten lost or have lost sight of Jesus.

The Lenten practice is a call for us to renew our YES and to recommit to Jesus. Our relationship with the divine is not one-way. God is not a "static" being but engages the hearts of those who are open and are sincere. In this way, there can be a great dynamism in the spaces between our hearts and the heart of God. Repentance then creates the condition of the experience of "newness" and brings about "healing."

We are called to be like the good thief, who does not delight in the fall of others like his fellow thief is doing to Jesus. The good

thief acknowledged Jesus and repented at the cross. In doing so, he moves from a state of disharmony to harmony with God.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

LENTEN EXERCISE

Reflect and examine our decisions and the stand we took during the season of Lent. Decide how to make what we started into a sustainable way of life for the rest of our lives, reflecting a creation-centered spirituality.

MY STAND

- Write my own short personal vision and prayer on how I can do my part to care for the earth and enter into harmony with creation. For instance, be charitable to my domestic helper, my colleagues, not being wasteful, or cut down plastics as much as possible.
- Set concrete goals to contribute to the Lenten Campaign 2022 and submit them to the parish or diocese.
- Volunteer to help my parish to be an eco-parish.



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