

No.26.

25th March 2021

Dear Friends,

This week, as we approach Holy Week and the great feast of Easter we consider what Jesus came to do - to win for us our Salvation, our Redemption. I have chosen a passage from "Theology and Sanity" by Frank Sheed to describe this.

As a reflection this week I came across a short poem entitled : "The Cross in My Pocket", which I find a rather lovely thought-provoking piece. I hope you find it helpful.

Finally, Bishop Barron speaks about the ongoing relationship between God and His Chosen People - seen in various covenants down the centuries - but culminating in the "new covenant" of Jesus on the Cross. He tackles the mystery of the Cross and why Jesus died for us.

Take care and God bless,
John de Waal.

Our Redemption Achieved.

Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice for the sin of the human race. That was the thing He had come to do, and it gave meaning to every other thing He did. The prophets of Israel had said that it would be so, but their message had made no apparent impact on the mind of their people.

On Palm Sunday, He entered Jerusalem humbly, riding upon an ass, and the crowds acclaimed Him wildly : for the last time. With Palm Sunday past, things moved rapidly to the crisis.

On the Thursday, "Knowing that His hour had come, that He should pass out of this world to the Father," He ate the paschal supper prescribed by Jewish law with His Apostles and then went on to make them the priests of the Eucharistic meal whereby until the end of the world men and women should receive His own Body and Blood.

The institution of the Blessed Eucharist tends to fill the mind's horizon when we think of the Last Supper. But though it was the towering fact of that night, it does not stand alone. At and after the Last Supper we have the greatest mass of teaching that Our Lord ever gave at one time. All four evangelists give their own account and the reader is urged to study them all; but it is St John who gives the fullest statement in his wonderful chapters XIV to XVII.

He is within hours of His death and He states ... "This is my blood of the new testament which is to be shed for many, to the remission of sins." What He says of the restoration of oneness between the human race and God is as clear : He prays for all who through the teaching of the Apostles, shall come to believe in Him, "that they also may be one as Thou, Father, in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me ... Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me ... that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them and I in them. (Jn.XVII.20-22)

This then is the life-formula of the Atonement (At-One-Ment): we are to be united with Him as He is united with the Father. "I am in my Father and you in Me, and I in you." (Jn. XIV.20)

(adapted from : "Theology and Sanity" by Frank Sheed).

The Cross in my pocket.

I carry a cross in my pocket
A simple reminder to me
Of the fact that I am a Christian
No matter where I may be.

This little cross is not magic
Nor is it a good luck charm
It isn't meant to protect me
From every physical harm.

It's not for identification
For all the world to see
It's simply an understanding
Between my Saviour and me.

When I put my hand in my pocket
To bring out a coin or a key
The cross is there to remind
Of the price He paid for me.

It reminds me, too, to be thankful
For my blessings day by day
And to strive to serve Him better
In all that I do or say.

It's also a daily reminder
Of the peace and comfort I share
With all who know my Master
And give themselves to His care.

So I carry a cross in my pocket
Reminding no one but me
That Jesus Christ is Lord of my life
If only I'll let Him be.



Bishop Robert Barron's Sunday Sermon.

Today's readings are from the 5th Sunday of Lent and Bishop Barron takes us through the covenants/agreements made between Himself and His Chosen people - from early times down to Jesus. We are party to this final covenant with Our Blessed Lord and it has huge consequences for us.

<https://youtu.be/N8EIPIN19u0>

Final Prayer - taken from Compline (the Night Prayer of the Church).

Antiphon. Save us, Lord, while we are awake; protect us while we sleep; that we may keep watch with Christ and rest with him in peace.

Nunc Dimittis.

At last, all-powerful Master,
you give leave to your servant
to go in peace, according to your promise.

For my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared for all nations, the
light to enlighten the Gentiles
and give glory to Israel, your people.

Antiphon. Save us, Lord, while we are awake; protect us while we sleep; that we may keep watch with Christ and rest with him in peace.

A short time for silent prayer.

Concluding prayer.

Lord our God,
restore us again by the repose of sleep after the fatigue of our daily work;
so that, continually renewed by your help, we may serve you in body and soul.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen

Blessing. Lord, grant us a quiet night and a perfect end. Amen.

A final thought.

“Pagan religions may show the divine distancing itself from human life and the physical. Jesus does the opposite. He shares our humanity so that we may share His divinity.”

Benedict XVI : “Jesus : Holy Week”.