

Scripture Reading - A Reading from the Book of Prophet Isaiah (*Isaiah 53:3-5*)

The Suffering Servant of God

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces, He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered Him stricken by God, smitten by Him, and afflicted. But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection ~ A Brief Meditation on the Passion of Jesus

Coin of infinite value. When we sin against God, we sin against His infinite goodness and love. As such, our debt needs to be repaid by a coin of infinite worth. Nothing on earth can repay this infinite debt and so God turned to His only begotten Son to remove this debt. As sin is committed by man, Jesus was borne incarnate as a man to repay this debt. Scripture tells us that sins when fully grown result in death (cf James 1:15). Out of a debt of love and gratitude, let us meditate briefly on His Passion to increase the tender love of our hearts for Him.

...**by His wounds we are healed (*Isaiah 53:5*).** Jesus healed the brokenness of our bodies due to sins of impurity by enduring the cruel scourging of His own Body. On studying the Shroud of Turin, scientists have determined that the Roman scourge used to whip our Lord consisted of three separate ropes or thongs, each ending in a set of two lead balls. These roughly shaped balls added weight to the beating, but also would tear the flesh of the victim and quickly remove the skin. Deep lacerations, torn flesh, exposed muscles and excessive bleeding would leave the criminal near to death. Death was often the result of this cruel form of punishment though it was necessary to keep the criminal alive to be brought for crucifixion on the cross. The centurion in charge would order the 'lectors' to halt the flogging when the criminal was near death.

The Mocking and Crowning of Thorns – an extract from 'The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ' by St. Anne Catherine Emmerich: "In the middle of the court there stood the fragment of a pillar, and on it was placed a very low stool which these cruel men maliciously covered with sharp flints and bits of broken potsherds. Then they tore off the garments of Jesus, thereby reopening all His wounds; threw over His shoulders an old scarlet mantle which barely reached His knees; dragged Him to the seat prepared, and pushed Him roughly down upon it, having first placed the crown of thorns upon His head. The crown of thorns was made of three branches plaited together, the greatest part of the thorns being purposely turned inwards so as to pierce our Lord's head. Having first placed these twisted branches on His forehead, they tied them tightly together at the back of His head, and no sooner was this accomplished to their satisfaction than they put a large reed into His hand, doing all with derisive gravity as if they were really crowning Him king. They then seized the reed, and struck His head so violently that His eyes were filled with blood; they knelt before Him, derided Him, spat in His face, and buffeted Him, saying at the same time, '*Hail, King of the Jews!*' Then they threw down His stool, pulled Him up again from the ground on which He had fallen, and reseated Him with the greatest possible brutality."

"It is quite impossible to describe the cruel outrages which were thought of and perpetrated by these monsters under human form. The sufferings of Jesus from thirst, caused by the fever which His wounds and sufferings had brought on, were intense. He trembled all over, His flesh was torn piecemeal, His tongue contracted, and the only refreshment He received was the blood which trickled from His head on to His parched lips. This shameful scene was protracted a full half-hour, and the Roman soldiers continued during the whole time to applaud and encourage the perpetration of still greater outrages." End of extract.

Conversation with Our Lord

Precious Lord, thank You from the bottom of my heart. You go through great pains and sorrows in order to show me how much You love me. Out of love for me, You take in every blow, every insult, every curse, every hurt to Your Sacred Heart. Lord, You have not loved in vain. I wish to reciprocate and I ask for the grace to meditate frequently on Your Passion so that my love for You will grow and never turn cold. I will do everything in my power to show my love for You. Mother Mary, protectress of faith, please teach me to love Jesus tenderly like You. Passion of Jesus strengthen me! Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.