

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Romans (*Romans 6:4-6,14*)

We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His. We know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection –Because of Christ’s Resurrection, our death is a step into our glorious eternal inheritance

Christ died once and for all. Christ died to provide a sacrifice to atone for the sins of mankind, because of the infinite love and high justice of God: infinite love because Christ is none other than God’s precious only begotten Son, high justice because every sin demands a corresponding punishment, and the consequence of a full blown sin is death. *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23).* Christ died once and for all but His one Sacrifice on Calvary is re-presented to God in holy Mass many times a day throughout the world and ages to atone for all sins committed throughout time. Thus, holy Mass, which has the same value as Christ dying on the cross, is our highest worship to God. It is to our great merit to attend and participate in Mass worthily.

Christ willingly put down His life for all. Though Jesus suffered an agonizing death, He was in no way compelled to do what He has done. Christ lives to do the will of God, His Father. *“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of Him Who sent Me and to finish His work (John 4:34).* Like Christ, we must also live to do the will of the Father. This is our highest purpose. Christ also tells us that God the Father is always with Him because He always does the will of the Father. *The One who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do what pleases Him (John 8:29).* In another occasion, Jesus tell His disciples His Father and He are one (cf. John 10:30). When Jesus died, His life was not snatched from Him but He willingly laid down His life to the Father to gain eternal life for all. *No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from My Father (John 10:18).*

Our own resurrection is very important. In the discourse on the Bread of Life in the Gospel according to St John, in chapter 6, Jesus repeated 3 times that He will raise up those who believe and adhered to His teachings, on the last day. Being a good teacher, Jesus repeats untiringly an important point till it sinks in and is understood by the hearers. St Paul further confirms this promise of Jesus, stating that those who are baptized into Christ will likewise be united to Christ in His Resurrection (cf. Romans 6:4-5).

A new creation in God - cleansed, made righteous, and empowered to live a new life of hope and grace. It is impossible for us to merit the righteousness of God through our good deeds alone. If this were so, we would have no need of a personal Saviour in Jesus Christ. The high justice of God demands that only the precious Blood of God’s only begotten Son can pay the price of sin. Thus, we are saved from our sins through faith by the grace Christ merited for us through His life, death and resurrection. We are washed clean as if we never sinned! *Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool (Isaiah 1:18).* We are clothed in His righteousness and therefore can stand before God! *God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).* Though we may still be assailed by temptation and human weaknesses, and be fragile like an earthen vessel, the all-surpassing power of God’s grace works in us mightily (cf. 2 Corinthians 4:7) to free us from bondage to self and sin and to strengthen us to walk steadfastly in faith and hope to our shining, glorious eternal inheritance that only God can plan for us.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, the whole of creation awaited Your Resurrection with abated breath and great expectation. Your Resurrection changes entirely the destiny of the whole of humankind. Death has lost its sting forever. Death has become a step into our glorious eternal inheritance that You lovingly prepared for all who love You. In You we become more than conquerors (cf. Romans 8:37). Our future destiny is assured, a foregone conclusion for those who adhered to Your teachings till the end. May we join the angels and saints in ceaselessly praising and thanking You for all eternity! Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for us. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.