

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Gospel according to St John (John 4:34)

"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of Him Who sent Me and to finish His work. The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection – To love is to obey - the faith of Jesus in God the Father

The Incarnation of Jesus Christ into man – Jesus accepts to assume human nature. The incarnation of Jesus, the only Son of God the Most High, into a human being is a stupendous act of sacrifice beyond the understanding of the human mind. *Christ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage, rather, He made Himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death-- even death on a cross! (Philippians 2:6-8).* By assuming human nature, Jesus made Himself nothing, subjecting Himself to time and space which He created. Jesus willingly steps down from His throne of glory in heaven where multitudes upon multitudes of angels attend to Him, divesting Himself of all glory. The very act of incarnation even to be born as a king in a gilded palace would have been more than sufficient to atone for all sins of humankind. But we know Jesus did much more. *Though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that we through His poverty might become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9).*

Therefore, when Christ came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You prepared for Me (Hebrews 10:5). Animal sacrifices and burnt offerings cannot take away our sins and are not pleasing to God the Father. Out of divine love, Jesus accepts to be the Sacrifice for all sins of mankind to satisfy God's divine justice. Jesus was born incarnate so that He could have a human body to suffer death for our sakes in order to free us from eternal death of our souls. He steps into our shoes and takes on the punishment due to our sins. For our sins of impurity, the Body of Christ was whipped by leather whips ending in sharp hooks. For our sins of arrogance and pride, Jesus was humiliated before the crowds and crowned with a crown of thorns. Jesus heals our woundedness caused by our sins by the wounds inflicted on His own Body. *He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on Him, and by His wounds we are healed (Isaiah 53:5).*

Christ experiences rejection to heal the wounds of rejection. *He was in the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize Him. He came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive Him (John 1:10-11).* The pride and hard-heartedness of the Jewish religious leaders meant that only the simple and lowly of the Jewish community can recognize Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah and render the homage and adoration due to Him. From His birth in a stable till His death on the Cross, Jesus suffered rejection throughout His life on earth. He was esteemed lower than a murderer when the crowds preferred to have Barabbas over Jesus to be released at Passover. However, the most difficult moment of Jesus's life of obedience to the Father must be the moment when He felt the abandonment by the Father on the Cross when Jesus said: My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? (cf. Matthew 27:46).

The institution of the Holy Eucharist, an extreme act of love and sacrifice. To love is to be with the beloved. Jesus divests Himself of all divine glory and makes Himself truly present in consecrated bread and wine. It is a Real Presence without evoking natural fear of the awesome majesty and power of God. It is a gift of gifts by God who is driven to this extreme measure by His great love for us. Yet we take it so much for granted. Yes, Jesus is present in fullness in the Holy Eucharist which He instituted at the Last Supper. It is a perpetuation of the Sacrifice on Calvary and a Sacrament of Abiding Presence to inspire souls to come to the throne of grace to beg for grace and help. Jesus instituted the Eucharist with great love despite knowing that through the Eucharist He will suffer sins against the Eucharist: sacrileges, indifference and outrages.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, You came in the flesh not just to redeem the world but also to teach us how to return love to God and glorify Him with our lives. You show us without a shadow of doubt how much we are loved by God. Through Your Holy Spirit, You pour Your love into our hearts, renewing our love every day. It is love that made us, that guides us on the path of life, and it is love that will win us the everlasting crown of life. Teach us filial obedience to God our Father by loving the way You love. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for us. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.