



Easter Triduum 2021

Holy Thursday

1st April

To love to the end...

Jesus was aware before the Feast of Passover that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father, that he had come from God and was returning to God. Time to show us his love to its fullest extent.

The Gospel of John, 13: 1 – 15 shows us a very significant action of Jesus in the context of the Last Supper.

1. Jesus got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and **began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.** (Jn 13: 4-5)
 - We allow ourselves time to contemplate this sequence of actions. We try to get to the heart of Jesus. What he is doing is extremely unusual in a person whom his own disciples and the people called “Master” and “Lord”; in the society of his time his was an action that belonged to slaves, servants and women.
 - Jesus humbles himself – this was his way since his incarnation: “He emptied himself, taking the form of a servant” (Phil 2:7) RSV). Washing the feet of each disciple is a way of showing them his love and welcome. Jesus breaks the patterns of master and slave, of dependencies; in his way, he was creating the horizontality of his Kingdom. He treats them as equals. That is the way of relating that Jesus shows us and invites us to live.



Leszek Forczek,
Washing of the Feet: Light to the Darkness

We can ask ourselves: *How do I live horizontality and equality in the groups to which I belong in mission and life; in my interpersonal relationships?*

2. Peter is unwilling to let Jesus wash his feet.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” Jesus replied, “You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.” “No,” said Peter, “you shall never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.” “Then, Lord,” Simon Peter replied, “not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!” (Jn 13: 6-9)

Peter does not accept Jesus' gesture, he does not understand it, and he resists. **He needs to change his mental models about power.**

- The document *Artisans of Hope*, p. 8, says: “Power, when exercised without mutuality and reciprocity, becomes a tool of domination and oppression.”
- P. 8-9: “Power affects the way we relate in community, live our vow of obedience, collaborate with people and groups in our ministries, and value or, at times, hold on to, the ministries entrusted to us.”

We might ask ourselves: *How do we live mutuality and reciprocity when we are exercising power in our life and mission?*

3. When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.”

(Jn 13:12-15)

- We are invited to wash one another’s feet in mutuality and reciprocity. This is the way of Jesus: “wash and let yourself be washed”. We remember how Jesus let a woman wash his feet with the tears from her eyes and wipe them with her hair, how she kissed his feet and anointed them with perfume. At the end of the scene, Jesus tells Simon that the woman has shown great love by this gesture and so her sins are forgiven. (Luke 7: 36-50)

We remember our experiences of service. *What lessons have I learnt?*



4. From the encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti* 115: (...) Service in great part means “caring for vulnerability, for the vulnerable members of our families, our society, our people”. In offering such service, individuals learn to “set aside their own wishes and desires, their pursuit of power, before the concrete gaze of those who are most vulnerable ... Service always looks to their faces, touches their flesh, senses their closeness and even, in some cases, ‘suffers’ that closeness and tries to help them. Service is never ideological, for we do not serve ideas, we serve people”.

How does this text enlighten me?

5. We finish our prayer with thanksgiving for so much love received from Jesus and from our sisters and brothers. We ask for the grace to love one another as He has loved us.

May we be blessed if we fulfil Jesus’ desire to wash one another’s feet, serving each other!



Easter Triduum 2021

Good Friday

2nd April

*“But when they came to Jesus
and saw that he was already dead,
they did not break his legs,
but one soldier thrust his lance into his side,
and immediately blood and water flowed out.”*

John 19:33-34

As women and men of the pierced Heart of God, Sacred Heart, this Good Friday passion invites us to the essence of our spirituality, the Wounded Heart of God, remembering the ultimate sacrifice of LOVE God showed through Jesus.

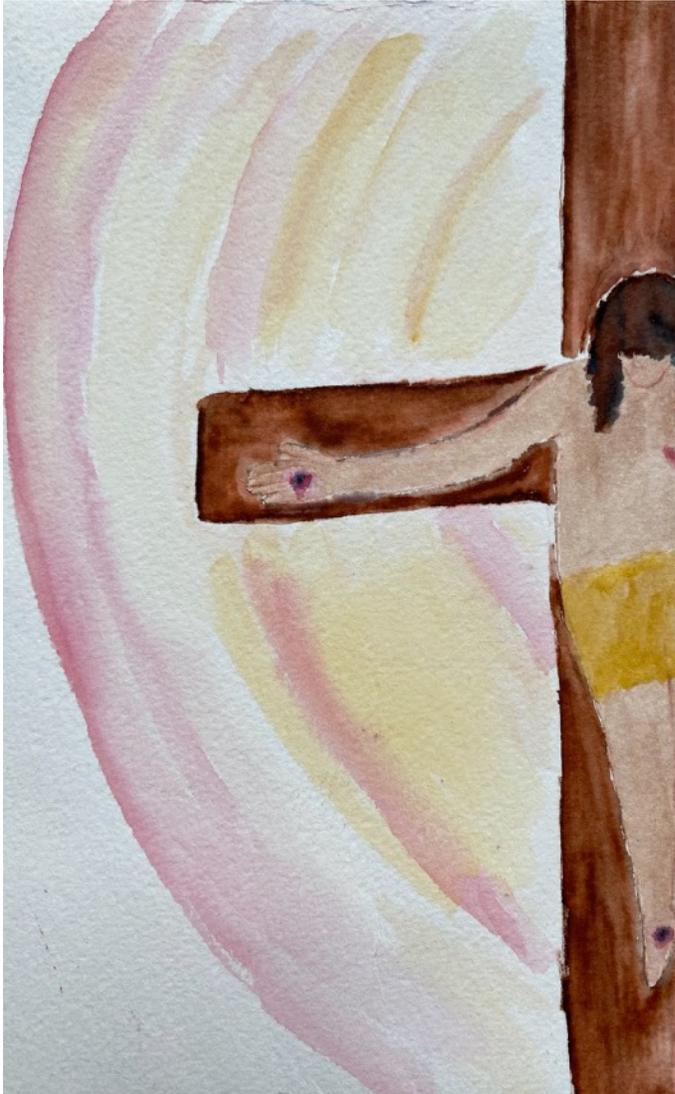
Where do you witness the broken open, pierced, heart of God today?

- in a refugee boarding an overcrowded boat in route to a new life...
- in the migrant sending their child unaccompanied to cross the border of another country...
- in a woman assaulted and murdered, commuting home from work...
- in the homeless person on the street corner asking for change, or a bite to eat...
- in a person of color, targeted and killed because of the color of their skin...
- in the loss of a loved one, family, sister or friend during a pandemic...

Crucifixion is happening all around us, each and every day if we have the courage to see and name the subtle ways God’s Heart continues to be pierced (crucified) through the crushing pain and violence endured by so many.

A few years ago, after hearing the news of another school shooting, I was moved beyond words as I watched in horror the reports of the school community in their tragic unfolding. I wept for parents, loved ones and most especially the little ones, forever changed in that violent event. When my heart could no longer hold the sorrow, an image came, and I had to find a way to create what I was seeing. I began to paint, yet the paper felt too small to encapsulate the incomprehensible loss, grief and sadness I had witnessed. The colors formed a crucifix, the sign of suffering and death alongside the consoling presence of a God who suffers with and for us. The red and yellow realms holding the emptiness and unimaginable grief with LOVE, God manifest in Jesus, heart pierced, broken open.

As the image began to dry, I started to see and then place the faces of the little ones, their family and friends, in the empty space beyond the page, nestled around the pierced open Heart of God. I painted the cross at the edge of the paper, partially visible, to invite the imagination of the viewer to place their own beloved there with God in the empty abyss beyond the page. It is an image that I come back to from time to time when I touch the unimaginable suffering in our blessed and broken world.



On this Good Friday, spend some time with this image and notice who you are being invited to place in the empty space beyond the page, next to the pierced Heart of God?

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Easter Triduum 2021

Holy Saturday

3rd April

Silence between two cries

“...He asked for Jesus’ body. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid.” (Luke 23: 52-53)

Introduction

Holy Saturday leads us into a time of silence between the cry of Jesus on the Cross and the cry that proclaims that Jesus has risen. This silence embraces all the silences of our world, so many unanswered questions and so many lives silenced... Let us live today in communion with all these realities. Let allow the Spirit to draw us into the great silence.



“Pieta of Syria” by Delawer Omar

Men and Women on Holy Saturday

As a doctor, I have treated hundreds of sick people. I have worked in cancer wards and in the AIDS ward, in one of the hospitals with the greatest number of AIDS patients in the city of Barcelona. I will begin with the latter. In the AIDS ward, I went on my own particular “walk through resurrection and death”. Death was an everyday occurrence. Almost each day some boy or girl died, to the despair of parents and health staff. All the experiences prompted me and the patients to ask many questions about suffering: Why is this happening to me? Where is God? Why does he send us this illness? What have I done to deserve it?

(Testimony of a doctor)

I look at the world and I see such great pain, such enormous injustice...and, yet, for some time now, there is something in me like a little light, that stays with me always. Well, in those moments when I see nothing, when I understand nothing, I am only an atrocious suffering, and sometimes I do not want to live; well, even in that situation, that little light is there and something keeps pulling me onwards, even though I don't know where that way leads. One thing I have learned, and that is to trust fully in what you called the fragile power of love.

(Testimony of a mother)

An Iranian refugee, a translator on the Greek island of Lesbos, will never forget a woman he tried to help as soon as she had landed. “I saw that her stomach was swelling rapidly, and I shouted that we had to take her to hospital. During the whole route, I held her in my arms. The woman didn't want us to help her, but wanted us to take care of her daughter. On the following day, I went to ask her family how she was. She didn't make it. The journey is so dangerous, that many men opt to go alone, trying to find a safer way for their family to follow them - a brave plan that can be defeated by the strict family reunification policies in Europe.”

(Testimony of a migrant)

Music

Listen to the poem of St John of the Cross : “Dark night of the soul” sung by Loreena McKennitt: [CLICK HERE](#)

In the spirit of Fratelli Tutti

“If only this immense sorrow may not prove useless, but enable us to take a step forward towards a new style of life. If only we might rediscover once for all that we need one another, and that in this way our human family can experience a rebirth, with all its faces, all its hands and all its voices, beyond the walls that we have erected.” (FT 35)

As Artisans of Hope

The crosses and the wounds of our world, of our common home and those who live in it, cry out in silence ... We are aware and “it is evident in political, social, economic, cultural and religious structures that impose unequal power relations, favouring some while oppressing, impoverishing, and marginalizing others.” In addition, we are witnesses that “people, countries, and our common home – earth – are devalued and destroyed by various forms of structural violence”. (*Artisans of Hope*, p. 12)

A Moment of Prayer

We can name these situations, and bring them confidently to our prayer. After each reality or situation we can sing the Taizé song: “By night we hasten in darkness”.

[CLICK HERE](#).

Women who are victims of trafficking
Unaccompanied migrant minors
Sick people who die alone
Child soldiers
People who are victims of climate catastrophes
...

On this day of silence, we invite you to ponder in your heart:

“Faced with these realities, of which I am possibly a part, should I remain in silence to listen to the voice of God, the voice of Hope?”

Bow reverently in silence before them.

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