



Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion April 13, 2014

Introductory Rites

Greeting

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: *Amen*

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And with your spirit.*

Sunday Liturgy Guide for the Church of the Poor in the Spirit of the New Evangelization

The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, can carry the redemptive Cross of Jesus only when she totally and humbly incarnates herself in the identity and solidarity with humanity, especially the poor and the masses, in their struggle to recover their human dignity, their divinity in total obedience to the will of the Father.

As we celebrate Palm Sunday and relive the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and his succeeding passion and death, let us continue to reflect on the context of our faith, as articulated by the PCP-II. As we do so, we ask ourselves whether we are a people ready to recognize the triumphant entry of Jesus into our lives as a people. We ask ourselves: what is this Cross that we must bear, as we follow Jesus who carried his cross to Calvary and death?

PCP-II says: **(20)** "We see today, especially after EDSA, a strong concern for broad social change. These past few years the realization has grown that change in social structures is not enough without change too in cultural values. In the soul-searching on reasons why we seem to be unable to move on our besetting social problems, there has been a tendency to look inward at the values that motivate us and to blame them as the main hindrances to movement. Possibly it is more correct to say it is not our

values so much that are at fault as the exaggeration and the wrong uses we have put them to. For it is precisely in their excess and abuse that our social ills arise.

(21) Even as we note the basic soundness of our values as a whole, however, we will have to characterize them as rather too particularistic, too focused on the good of small social groups (the extended family, the clan, little in-groups of all kinds). This narrow focusing easily lends itself to the factionalization that social scientists say is characteristic of much of Philippine society. Lacking is a more universalistic outlook that would put as much stress on the good of wider groupings, the community, the nation, humanity and the world at large."

Seen in the light of culture and values, is it possible that the more essential and heavier cross that we must carry is not so much the cross of personal failures and mistakes, though these are real and heavy? Rather, isn't it the cross of narrowness of values that produce factions, the cross of the inability to move towards genuine and comprehensive social change because of our fixation to small in-group belongingness such as family and clan and the like? Is this cross found in your BEC? Must you die in this cross so that your BEC, and you, will have a new and better life? ■

Introduction and Welcome

P: Dear brothers and sisters, since the beginning of Lent until now, we have prepared our hearts by penance and charitable works of justice and compassion. Today, we gather together to herald with the whole Church the beginning of the celebration of our Lord's Paschal Mystery, that is to say, of his Passion and Resurrection. For it was to accomplish this mystery that he entered his own city of Jerusalem. Therefore, with all faith and devotion, let us commemorate the Lord's entry into the city for our salvation, following his footsteps, so that, being made by his grace partakers of the Cross, we may have a share also in his Resurrection and in his life.

Let us pray: Almighty ever-living God, sanctify + these branches with your blessing, that we, who follow Christ the King in exultation, may reach the eternal Jerusalem through him. Who live and reigns forever and ever.

C: *Amen.*

(The priest then sprinkles the branches with holy water without saying anything.)

Gospel Reading: Matt 21:1-11

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And with your Spirit.*

P: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

C: *Glory be to you, O Lord.*

“When Jesus and the disciples drew near Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tethered, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them here to me. And if anyone should say

anything to you, reply, ‘The master has need of them.’ Then he will send them at once.”

This happened so that what had been spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled: Say to daughter Zion, “Behold, your king comes to you, meek and riding on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.”

The disciples went and did as Jesus had ordered them. They brought the ass and the colt and laid their cloaks over them, and he sat upon them. The very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and strewed them on the road. The crowds preceding him and those following kept crying out and saying: “Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is the he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest.” And when he entered Jerusalem the whole city was shaken and asked, “Who is this?” And the crowds replied, “This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Commentary on Matt 21:1-11

Finally, after his teachings on his final destiny and the cost of following him, Jesus now enters Jerusalem, the center of socio-economic, political, religio-cultural power. The kingdom of God will now confront decisively the kingdom of the world.

The quote from Zech 9:9 may bring back to memory the liberation of Israel from the Babylonian exile by Persia. However, if Zech 9 was written at a later period, with the mention of the Greeks in Zech 9:13, it is possible that the historical backdrop is the Greek occupation of Israel in the fourth century under Alexander the Great (333 BCE). In this period, there were two contrasting expectations of a messiah: (a) the

triumphant warrior-messiah and (b) the suffering-servant messiah.

Matthew's description of Jesus riding on an ass and a colt recalls Zech 9:9. There is a contrast here between the horse of a warrior and an ass, the beast of burden. Jesus rides on an ass, friend of the poor and companion in productive labor; not on a horse of the soldier of an imperial army. He is the humble Messiah, friend of the poor and of productive labor. He has come to suffer for the sake of life and the dreams of the poor, rather than triumphantly to kill them on behalf of the empire and its ambitions of power, glory and greed.

But why did Jesus ask for the colt to come as well? Was he going to take the side of the children of labor if they should rise?

The city is now torn into two by his triumphant humble entry into Jerusalem. The poor and the ordinary citizen hail and proclaim him: Son of David and prophet. The elite and the authorities, by asking: Who is this?, have ironically rejected him!

P: Dear brothers and sisters, like the crowds who acclaimed Jesus in Jerusalem, let us go forth in peace.

(Procession to the Church begins.)

(In the Church, the Mass starts with the Collect.)

Collect

P: Let us pray: Almighty ever-living God, who as an example of humility for the human race to follow caused our Savior to take flesh and submit to the Cross, graciously grant that we may heed his lesson of patient suffering and so merit a share in his Resurrection. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God,

forever and ever.

C: *Amen.*

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Is 50:4-7

L: A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

The Lord GOD has given me a well-trained tongue, that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them. Morning after morning he opens my ear that I may hear; and I have not rebelled, have not turned back. I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard; my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting. The Lord GOD is my help, therefore I am not disgraced; I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

Commentary on Is 50:4-7:

This is the third song of the Suffering Servant. It speaks particularly of the Suffering Servant as being formed by God so that he could articulate the mind of God to the lowly. But this is strange: filled with the word of God and trained to proclaim it, yet when arrested and tortured, he opened not his mouth, he did not complain. Confident was he that God would vindicate him. Before his oppressors and torturers, he would not betray the cause of the poor and the weary by his vengeful rebellion and loud complaints. Yahweh has taken his side: with the victim he would execute the quiet underground plan of liberation.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24

R: *(2a) My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?*

All who see me scoff at me; they mock me with parted lips, they wag their heads: "He relied on the LORD; let him

deliver him, let him rescue him, if he loves him.”

R: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Indeed, many dogs surround me, a pack of evildoers closes in upon me; They have pierced my hands and my feet; I can count all my bones.

R: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

They divide my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots. But you, O LORD, be not far from me; O my help, hasten to aid me.

R: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

I will proclaim your name to my brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise you: “You who fear the LORD, praise him; all you descendants of Jacob, give glory to him; revere him, all you descendants of Israel!”

R: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Commentary on Ps 22:

This is an individual psalm of lament, of three parts: (a) lamentation, vv. 2-22; (b) thanksgiving, vv. 23-27, and (c) hymn to the Lord, the king of all, vv. 28-32. The lamentation part articulates the depth of the psalmist’s sadness and extent of victimization. He feels so alone and abandoned that he raises the question: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? This question expresses extreme solitude that leads to death; and the “why” that seeks justice through a judicial process. But the psalmist also realizes that his help radically is in the Lord. That is why he expresses, in his dire torment and slow death, such an enormous absolute trust, gratitude and praise to God as his only savior. The history of his people’s struggle has proved this so.

Second Reading: Phil 2:6-11

L: A reading from the Letter of St. Paul

to the Philippians.

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

Commentary on Phil 2:6-11:

This is one of the most moving hymn that Paul, or the author, has used in order to describe the profound solidarity of the divine Jesus with the depth of the human condition. Written in prison for the Christian community of a prime city dedicated to the father of the Greek conqueror Alexander the Great and now a useful and powerful hub of the Roman Empire, a crossroad that connects Europe and Asia, the letter is written with full tenderness along the themes of Jesus’ humiliation and exaltation. This theme is developed within the dynamic framework of Jesus’ descent into the emptiness and nothingness of the human condition, only to ascend into the glory of God the Father, adored and hallowed by everyone and all of creation. This divine solidarity with the human condition is so audacious and so tender, made possible by the incarnation of one who has pre-existed equally with the Father. Yet he has disregarded his equality with God, and preferred instead to empty himself, becoming

totally poor with humanity, in total obedience to the will of the Father. It is his total solidarity with the masses, being thoroughly with the masses, and being the poorest servant of the poor that has led him to death, even death on the cross. It is that extreme emptiness and death on the cross that define his exaltation by the supreme and sovereign act of God: his resurrection. Now he is Lord, his name is proclaimed above every name: the Suffering Servant is now identified as Lord Yahweh from of old – Jesus Christ in the new time. So, we too must walk our way of the Cross – the true incarnation is in solidarity with the masses, with the poor in their struggle to retake the shared identity of divinity, in humility, suffering and death, even on the cross – in total obedience to the will of the Father. For a Christian, and for Paul’s followers, there is no other way to the exaltation/resurrection but the cross of the incarnation, of emptiness, of solidarity and struggle with the human condition!

P: The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew (Matt 26:14-27:66)

L: One of the Twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said,

C: “What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?”

L: They paid him thirty pieces of silver, and from that time on he looked for an opportunity to hand him over. On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples approached Jesus and said,

C: “Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?”

L: He said,

P: “Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, ‘The teacher says, ‘My appointed time draws near; in your house I shall celebrate the Passover with

my disciples.’””

L: The disciples then did as Jesus had ordered, and prepared the Passover.

When it was evening, he reclined at table with the Twelve. And while they were eating, he said,

P: “Amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me.”

L: Deeply distressed at this, they began to say to him one after another,

C: “Surely it is not I, Lord?”

L: He said in reply,

P: “He who has dipped his hand into the dish with me is the one who will betray me. The Son of Man indeed goes, as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would be better for that man if he had never been born.”

L: Then Judas, his betrayer, said in reply,

C: “Surely it is not I, Rabbi?”

L: He answered,

P: “You have said so.”

L: While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said,

P: “Take and eat; this is my body.”

L: Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying,

P: “Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, from now on I shall not drink this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father.”

L: Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them,

P: “This night all of you will have your faith in me shaken, for it is written: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be dispersed; but after I have been raised up, I shall go before you to Galilee.”

L: Peter said to him in reply,

C: “Though all may have their faith in you shaken, mine will never be.”

L: Jesus said to him,
P: "Amen, I say to you, this very night before the cock crows, you will deny me three times."
L: Peter said to him,
C: "Even though I should have to die with you, I will not deny you."
L: And all the disciples spoke likewise. Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples,
P: "Sit here while I go over there and pray."
L: He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress. Then he said to them,
P: "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me."
L: He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying,
P: "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will."
L: When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter,
P: "So you could not keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."
L: Withdrawing a second time, he prayed again,
P: "My Father, if it is not possible that this cup pass without my drinking it, your will be done!"
L: Then he returned once more and found them asleep, for they could not keep their eyes open. He left them and withdrew again and prayed a third time, saying the same thing again. Then he returned to his disciples and said to them,
P: "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand when the Son of Man is to be handed over to sinners. Get up, let us go. Look, my betrayer is at hand."
L: While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived, accompanied by a large crowd, with swords and clubs, who had come from the chief priests and

the elders of the people. His betrayer had arranged a sign with them, saying,
C: "The man I shall kiss is the one; arrest him."
L: Immediately he went over to Jesus and said,
C: "Hail, Rabbi!"
L: and he kissed him. Jesus answered him,
P: "Friend, do what you have come for."
L: Then stepping forward they laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. And behold, one of those who accompanied Jesus put his hand to his sword, drew it, and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him,
P: "Put your sword back into its sheath, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot call upon my Father and he will not provide me at this moment with more than twelve legions of angels? But then how would the Scriptures be fulfilled which say that it must come to pass in this way?"
L: At that hour Jesus said to the crowds,
P: "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to seize me? Day after day I sat teaching in the temple area, yet you did not arrest me. But all this has come to pass that the writings of the prophets may be fulfilled."
L: Then all the disciples left him and fled. Those who had arrested Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. Peter was following him at a distance as far as the high priest's courtyard, and going inside he sat down with the servants to see the outcome. The chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward who stated,
C: "This man said, 'I can destroy the

temple of God and within three days rebuild it.”

L: The high priest rose and addressed him,

C: “Have you no answer? What are these men testifying against you?”

L: But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him,

C: “I order you to tell us under oath before the living God whether you are the Christ, the Son of God.”

L: Jesus said to him in reply,

P: “You have said so. But I tell you: From now on you will see ‘the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power’ and ‘coming on the clouds of heaven.’”

L: Then the high priest tore his robes and said,

C: “He has blasphemed! What further need have we of witnesses? You have now heard the blasphemy; what is your opinion?”

L: They said in reply,

C: “He deserves to die!”

L: Then they spat in his face and struck him, while some slapped him, saying,

C: “Prophecy for us, Christ: who is it that struck you?”

L: Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. One of the maids came over to him and said,

C: “You too were with Jesus the Galilean.”

L: But he denied it in front of everyone, saying,

C: “I do not know what you are talking about!”

L: As he went out to the gate, another girl saw him and said to those who were there,

C: “This man was with Jesus the Nazorean.”

L: Again he denied it with an oath,

C: “I do not know the man!”

L: A little later the bystanders came over and said to Peter,

C: “Surely you too are one of them; even your speech gives you away.”

L: At that he began to curse and to swear,

C: “I do not know the man.”

L: And immediately a cock crowed.

Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had spoken: “Before the cock crows you will deny me three times.”

He went out and began to weep bitterly.

When it was morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate, the governor. Then Judas, his betrayer, seeing that Jesus had been condemned, deeply regretted what he had done. He returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying,

C: “I have sinned in betraying innocent blood.”

L: They said,

C: “What is that to us? Look to it yourself.”

L: Flinging the money into the temple, he departed and went off and hanged himself. The chief priests gathered up the money, but said,

C: “It is not lawful to deposit this in the temple treasury, for it is the price of blood.”

L: After consultation, they used it to buy the potter’s field as a burial place for foreigners. That is why that field even today is called the Field of Blood. Then was fulfilled what had been said through Jeremiah the prophet, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of a man with a price on his head, a price set by some of the Israelites, and they paid it out for the potter’s field just as the Lord had commanded me. Now Jesus stood before the governor, and he questioned him,

C: “Are you the king of the Jews?”

L: Jesus said,

P: “You say so.”

L: And when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer. Then Pilate said to him,

C: “Do you not hear how many things they are testifying against you?”

L: But he did not answer him one word, so that the governor was greatly amazed. Now on the occasion of the feast the governor was accustomed to release to the crowd one prisoner whom they wished. And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So when they had assembled, Pilate said to them,

C: “Which one do you want me to release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus called Christ?”

L: For he knew that it was out of envy that they had handed him over. While he was still seated on the bench, his wife sent him a message,

C: “Have nothing to do with that righteous man. I suffered much in a dream today because of him.”

L: The chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas but to destroy Jesus. The governor said to them in reply,

C: “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?”

L: They answered,

C: “Barabbas!”

L: Pilate said to them,

C: “Then what shall I do with Jesus called Christ?”

L: They all said,

C: “Let him be crucified!”

L: But he said,

C: “Why? What evil has he done?”

L: They only shouted the louder,

C: “Let him be crucified!”

L: When Pilate saw that he was not succeeding at all, but that a riot was breaking out instead, he took water and washed his hands in the sight of the crowd, saying,

C: “I am innocent of this man’s blood. Look to it yourselves.”

L: And the whole people said in reply,

C: “His blood be upon us and upon our children.”

L: Then he released Barabbas to them, but after he had Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus inside the praetorium and gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped off his clothes and threw a scarlet military cloak about him.

Weaving a crown out of thorns, they placed it on his head, and a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying,

C: “Hail, King of the Jews!”

L: They spat upon him and took the reed and kept striking him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him off to crucify him. As they were going out, they met a Cyrenian named Simon; this man they pressed into service to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha — which means Place of the Skull —, they gave Jesus wine to drink mixed with gall. But when he had tasted it, he refused to drink. After they had crucified him, they divided his garments by casting lots; then they sat down and kept watch over him there. And they placed over his head the written charge against him: This is Jesus, the King of the Jews. Two revolutionaries were crucified with him, one on his right and the other on his left. Those passing by reviled him, shaking their heads and saying,

C: “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, if you are the Son of God, and come down from the cross!”

L: Likewise the chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him and said,

C: “He saved others; he cannot save himself. So he is the king of Israel! Let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he

wants him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

L: The revolutionaries who were crucified with him also kept abusing him in the same way. From noon onward, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o’clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice,

P: “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?”

L: which means,

P: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

L: Some of the bystanders who heard it said,

C: “This one is calling for Elijah.”

L: Immediately one of them ran to get a sponge; he soaked it in wine, and putting it on a reed, gave it to him to drink. But the rest said,

C: “Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to save him.”

L: But Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, and gave up his spirit.

(Here all kneel and pause for a short time.)

L: And behold, the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth quaked, rocks were split, tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And coming forth from their tombs after his resurrection, they entered the holy city and appeared to many. The centurion and the men with him who were keeping watch over Jesus feared greatly when they saw the earthquake and all that was happening, and they said,

C: “Truly, this was the Son of God!”

L: There were many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him. Among them were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who was himself a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate

ordered it to be handed over. Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it in clean linen and laid it in his new tomb that he had hewn in the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed. But Mary Magdalene and the other Mary remained sitting there, facing the tomb. The next day, the one following the day of preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said,

C: “Sir, we remember that this impostor while still alive said, ‘After three days I will be raised up.’ Give orders, then, that the grave be secured until the third day, lest his disciples come and steal him and say to the people, ‘He has been raised from the dead.’ This last imposture would be worse than the first.”

L: Pilate said to them,

C: “The guard is yours; go, secure it as best you can.”

L: So they went and secured the tomb by fixing a seal to the stone and setting the guard.

P: The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Commentary on Matt 26,14-27:66

This is Matthew’s version of the Passion of Jesus. It starts with the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, made most painful by the fact that the treachery was done by someone closest to him. What motivated him to betray his closest teacher? Love for money, ambition, envy or disillusionment? In the meal, Jesus allows those closest to him to experience the joy of his complete submission to and total confidence in God. But there is a subtlety in regard to the relationship between Jesus and his disciples in this meal that celebrates human intimacy: everyone else around the table calls him Lord, except Judas who calls him Rabbi, Teacher. This is how the enemies of Jesus addressed him: teacher! His body shared in the meal

becomes the point of convergence and unity among those who participate in the community meal; it is Jesus' gift of life that suffers and dies for others, but also a life that gives life and forgiveness of sins on the cross. It is a meal that celebrates the victory of the cross and the ultimate victory of God.

The agony of Jesus in the garden demonstrates the total humanity of Jesus: his profound fear, his deepest sadness, and his total abandonment of himself to the Father. That is why his arrest becomes a showcase of his pacifist and non-violent way of loving. His merciful love has prevented the possibility of the spiral of violence which violence itself generates. Peter's denial of Jesus stays in contrast to the tragic suicide of Judas: the former repented when he realized his sin of denying Jesus; Judas returned his treacherous money, showed repentance but violently ended his life. Peter, the Church, can rise up by the help of repentance and forgiveness; Judas' contrition and actual change could not happen because he blocked their possibility by taking his own life!

On the cross Jesus experiences the total abandonment and desolation. Not even his Father was there to succor him. His death exposes the total incapacity of the old temple, of the old religion to give a place of worship to God. Instead, it opens up new possibilities for a new life: the open access to the Father. With the order of the authorities to have the tomb of Jesus guarded well, the rumor going around that his body was robbed and taken away by his disciples is dispelled and makes the fact of the resurrection undeniable.

Join Fr. Ben Alforque, MSC of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in **GOSPEL BREAK**, a short yet entertaining and insightful discussion of this Sunday's Gospel on YouTube.

Visit gospelbreak.wordpress.com. Or scan this QR code with your Smartphone or tablet.



The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, can carry the redemptive Cross of Jesus only when she totally and humbly incarnates herself in the identity and solidarity with humanity, especially the poor and the masses, in their struggle to recover their human dignity, their divinity in total obedience to the will of the Father.

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Homily: The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, can carry the redemptive Cross of Jesus only when she totally and humbly incarnates herself in the identity and solidarity with humanity, especially the poor and the masses, in their struggle to recover their human dignity, their divinity in total obedience to the will of the Father.

Summary of the Sunday Reading Message	Concrete description of the poor people and their situation	Reflection/ Points for reflection/ Call/ Challenge
<p>The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, can carry the redemptive Cross of Jesus only when she totally and humbly incarnates herself in the identity and solidarity with humanity, especially the poor and the masses, in their struggle to recover their human dignity, their divinity in total obedience to the will of the Father.</p>	<p>In your experience as BEC, cite concrete experiences of dehumanization, of denial of your human dignity and the trampling of your divinity. Are these made possible by individual persons or embedded in the social system itself? What have you as BEC done or are doing in order to re-claim this dignity, the divine in you? What is your experience of triumph and glory in the Cross of solidarity that you carry?</p>	<p>The profound mystery of the incarnation and the Cross cannot be totally grasped, but we get an experience of it through our re-living of the self-emptying of Jesus for the sake of the human condition and the struggle of the poorest of the poor to re-claim their identity and dignity as children of God and sharers in the Divinity of the Resurrected Christ.</p>

Profession of Faith

A: I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born

of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the Faithful:

P: Dear sisters and brothers, let us humbly ask God now to help us carry the redemptive Cross of Jesus in our time and so re-live his Passion and Death with the poor among us. For every prayer let our response be: Lord, strengthen us to do your will, even unto death.

R: Lord, strengthen us to do your will, even unto death.

L: Let us pray for the Church: that being a Church of the Poor spread all over the world, she may continue to proclaim the self-emptying of Jesus and his exaltation by taking up the cause of the poor for their liberation,

dignity and divinity by herself being poor. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, strengthen us to do your will, even unto death.

L: For our Holy Father, Pope Francis I, for the bishops, priests, deacons, for those in consecrated life and for all those who are entrusted with the care and administration of the church as People of God: that they may continue to re-live the life of the Suffering Servant by a lifestyle of simplicity and poverty, committed unselfish service and radical obedience to the will of the Father. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, strengthen us to do your will, even unto death.

L: For world leaders and all those entrusted with governance and administration of the goods of the earth: that they may take up the Cross of protecting the environment and ecology against the exploitation by capitalist greed, government corruption and social blindness and apathy. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, strengthen us to do your will, even unto death.

L: For all of us: that we may be strengthened in our resolve to follow Jesus in his Passion and Death by accompanying the poor and the weak in their quest for a better life, in spite of the betrayal and pains that we may reap from those who swore to protect them. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, strengthen us to do your will, even unto death.

L: For our beloved dead: that in the forgiveness of their sins, they may find eternal rest in the heart of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, strengthen us to do your will, even unto death.

L: For our special intentions, in the silence of our hearts. (*pause*)... Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, strengthen us to do your

will, even unto death.

P: Lord, we know that our struggle for social change through holiness and justice can be heavy and lonesome. Unite our human efforts always with the Cross of your Son, and so lead us to the attainment of the joy of new life in the Resurrection. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R: *Amen.*

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Preparation of the Altar and the Gifts

P: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,

C: *Blessed be God forever.*

P: Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

C: *May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.*

Prayer over the Offerings

P: Through the Passion of your Only Begotten Son, O Lord, may our reconciliation with you be near at hand, so that, though we do not merit it by our own deeds, yet by his sacrifice made once for all, we may feel already the effects of your mercy. Through Christ our Lord.

C: *Amen.*

Prayer of the Eucharist

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And with your spirit.*

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: *We lift them up to the Lord.*

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: *It is right and just.*

P: It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For, though innocent, he suffered willingly for sinners and accepted unjust condemnation to save the guilty. His Death has washed away our sins, and his Resurrection has purchased our

justification.

And so, with all the Angels, we praise you, as in joyful celebration we too, acclaim:

A: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Acclamation

P: The mystery of faith.

A: Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.
(Concluding the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest says:)

P: Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, for ever and ever.

C: *Amen.*

Communion Rite

The Lord's Prayer

Doxology

C: For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever.

Sign of Peace

P: Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles; Peace ... Who live and reign for ever and ever.

C: *Amen.*

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: *And with your spirit.*

P: Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Breaking of the Bread

A: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world ... grant us peace.

Communion

P: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

A: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Prayer after Communion

P: Let us pray: Nourished with these sacred gifts, we humbly beseech you, O Lord, that, just as through the death of your Son you have brought us to hope for what we believe, so by his Resurrection you may lead us to where you call. Through Christ our Lord.

C: *Amen.*

Final Blessing

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And with your spirit.*

P: Bow down for the blessing: May God, the Father of mercies, who has given you an example of love in the Passion of his Only Begotten Son, grant that, by serving God and your neighbor, you may lay hold of the wondrous gift of his blessing.

C: *Amen.*

P: So that you may receive the reward of everlasting life from him, through whose earthly Death you believe that you escape eternal death.

C: *Amen.*

P: And by following the example of his self-abasement, may you possess a share in his Resurrection.

C: *Amen.*

P: And may the blessings of almighty God, + the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down upon you and remain with you forever.

Dismissal

P: Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

C: *Thanks be to God. ■*