

Psalm 22

This psalm, which is so often quoted throughout the New Testament, has much in common with the book of Job. It is a genuine lament, and the hurt and pain which run through it, are symptomatic of a very personal hurt which has been suffered by the writer. How much might the Apostles have had this psalm in their minds as they saw Christ being tortured and crucified? Was it enough to destroy all their hope? Hopefully they kept the Psalmist's faith in God. The Psalmist knew that God had previously saved his people and that he had looked after him since his birth. When times are hard and we're having crises of faith, it might be hard for us to consider that God 'has our back'. Today of all days should remind us of the lengths that God goes to when we've turned our faces from him. He wants that relationship with us to be strengthened. Let us try to ensure that we're also striving for that.

Elements of the Mass

Behold the Wood of the Cross

'Behold the wood of the cross...' is the beginning of the English version of the ancient text sung by the priest or cantor as a large wooden cross or crucifix is brought into Church in today's service. This marks the start of the second part of the Good Friday Liturgy, the Veneration of the Cross, when the faithful come forward to kiss the wood of the cross or the image on it as a sign of their love for the Crucified Lord. The practice began with the veneration of the relics of the True Cross in Jerusalem and is mentioned in the fourth century pilgrimage account of Egeria. Subsequently this custom was transferred to Rome when relics of the cross were deposited in the church of Santa Croce, and from there the custom spread even to churches that had no such relics: the very image of Christ crucified should surely bring us to worship.

2nd April
2021

Good Friday

Thirty Years Among us Dwelling



Many traditional Catholic parishes take pride in the celebration of a daily Mass. The Eucharistic heart of Jesus is open and available for his followers every day of the year, and we value the familiar pattern of worship. But then on Good Friday, the daily routine of the church is interrupted. There is no celebration of the Mass as we know it; no consecration of the bread and wine, no Eucharistic sacrifice. This is to focus our minds on Jesus' sacrifice of himself which he offered on the wood of the cross. We behold him 'exalted to great heights, disfigured, no longer human. He was pierced through for our faults.' As we venerate the cross we contemplate the high cost of our redemption. 'Thirty years among us dwelling, his appointed time fulfilled, born for this, he meets his passion, for that this he freely willed, on the cross the lamb is lifted where his life-blood shall be spilled.' – May our response be: come let us worship, and honour this sacrifice whenever we receive the sacred host and the precious blood of Christ.

Prayers to Remember

O Christ, give us patience and faith and hope as we kneel at the foot of thy cross, and hold fast to it. Teach us by thy Cross that however ill the world may go, the Father so loved us that he spared not thee.

Charles Kingsley