

## HOMILY – GOOD FRIDAY – 14 APRIL 2017

### “MINDFULNESS”

“Good Friday” – Why is it called “Good Friday”? What’s good about Jesus dying on a cross? It is good for at least two reasons. Firstly, the crucifixion of Jesus marks the moment of our redemption. Do you remember the moment St John the Baptist looked at Jesus, so mindfully, and declared boldly “Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.” Well, this is the moment when it happened. Jesus is the eternal paschal lamb, who is offered up as the true sacrifice for our redemption. The deadly power of evil is overcome by Christ. Secondly, there can be no resurrection until Christ has died for us. The cross is the prelude to the resurrection. As Jesus predicts, in John’s Gospel, Chapter 3, “Yes, God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in Him may not be lost, but may have eternal life”.

In this plan then, there is something very difficult to accept, that the Son of Man would have to die on the cross and also to rise from the dead. Thus, to be a Christian, in the Catholic sense, means not one who merely “believes in God”, we are Catholic Christians because we believe the testimony of Jesus. That He taught it, He prophesied it, He prepared His Apostles for it. And He carried it out faithfully.

We say in conversation don’t we, “Did it ever cross your mind that children hadn’t been fed?” The Cross of Christ, always reminds of Jesus’s sacrifice, whenever we see it.

In ten minutes time, I will carry into the church, a large wooden cross and pronounce the words, “Behold, Behold, the wood of the cross, on which is hung our salvation and you reply. “O come let us adore”. So, when we come forward and kiss the wood of the cross, we express a deep appreciation to Christ for what He has done for us.

When we kiss the wood of the cross, we are also kissing, as a sign of our loyalty to God’s will. Judas kissed Jesus as a sign of betrayal. “The one I kiss”, he said to Roman soldiers. “He is the Man”. We kiss the wood of the cross as a declaration of self-sacrifice in our baptism. In other words, ‘to die to self in order to live for Christ’. To always be mindful of what He has done for our sake. So too we may be mindful of those around who are being crucified unjustly. That we don’t stand idly by. In the words of Pope Francis, “those united to Jesus know that the cross itself is triumph and therefore their only hope. When they face challenges, they will not come down from the cross, they will continue on with the mission that was given them”.

Good Friday, 3 o’clock, Jerusalem, was then the death that revolutionised the world. When Jesus died on the cross, that day, the world became a different place, it would never be the same. Something earth shattering and radical had transformed the world. It was the final revelation of the living human God in action. It tells us of the good news of God and His love for us, a generous self-giving love, a covenant love, never ending true love, a Jesus of Nazareth love, that great event of the 3 o’clock victory of love on the cross.