

## Good Friday

The 'rubrics' for the liturgy of the Passion of the Lord say *"After the reading of the Lord's Passion, the Priest gives a brief homily and, at its end, the faithful may be invited to spend a short time in prayer"*. So, I will continue with the theme of 'hiddenness' using the 'hiddenness' of Jesus' early life as a guide to our 'hiddenness' due to Covid-19, but also considering the more meditative and prayerful nature of the day. In a way 'hiddenness' fits with meditation and prayerfulness. So, I pick up from where we left off yesterday evening with the hidden years of Jesus in Nazareth

The Catechism says, *"Jesus' obedience to his mother and legal father fulfils the fourth commandment perfectly and was the temporal image of his filial obedience to his Father in heaven. The everyday obedience of Jesus to Joseph and Mary both announced and anticipated the obedience of Holy Thursday: 'Not my will...' The obedience of Christ in the daily routine of his hidden life was already inaugurating his work of restoring what the disobedience of Adam had destroyed."*<sup>1</sup> Immediately we might be reminded of these words from the Gospel of St. John: *"Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life."*<sup>2</sup> Jesus is obedient and fulfils God's plan of love for the world, restoring our lost friendship with him.

During his passion and death, the meaning of his love was hidden from view to those who watched. Hidden under brutality and cruelty, but to be revealed later. Today with relatives, friends and parishioners isolated from another much love is also 'hidden'. In the worse cases people find themselves isolated when they are dying, and relatives cannot comfort them 'face to face' and say a final good-bye. Jesus shared humanity's isolated suffering for he cried out, *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me."*<sup>3</sup> Once dead, hidden work is carried out. Jesus descends into the realm of the dead and preaches to the spirits there, an ancient homily for Holy Saturday states -

*"Today a great silence reigns on earth, a great silence and a great stillness. A great silence because the King is asleep. The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and he has raised up all who have slept ever since the world began... He has gone to search for Adam, our first father, as for a lost sheep. Greatly desiring to visit those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, he has gone to free from sorrow Adam in his bonds and Eve, captive with him – He who is both their God and the son of Eve... "I am your God, who for your sake have become your son... I order you, O sleeper, to awake. I did not create you to be a prisoner in hell. Rise from the dead, for I am the life of the dead."*<sup>4</sup>

Much good work that happens during this crisis will remain hidden, perhaps even our own. If our own obedience to the Father's will or other good authority may lead to our suffering, may love be the fruit. May we not feel forsaken. May the Lord also touch us in our 'hiddenness' today so that we can reach out to those who are often hidden in the busyness

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<sup>1</sup> Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 532

<sup>2</sup> John 3: 16

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 27:46

<sup>4</sup> Ancient homily for Holy Saturday.

of our world. May God's love not be hidden from view. Jesus dies giving the Father's love for all. May those who feel dead in spirit because they cannot see God's love in the world they inhabit see the Cross as a sign of love and hope. Mat they hear Jesus calling to them, 'Come to me all you who are labour and are heavily burdened.'