

It Is Finished!

TODAY'S READING: JOHN 19

Jesus was flogged, ridiculed, beaten and ultimately crucified. He who was without sin was treated like the worst sinner and died through the most painful punishment that humans ever invented. But what were Jesus' final words? "It is finished" (verse 30). The disciples did not understand the meaning of his death. Was death not the ultimate failure? Besides, dying on a wooden cross was considered a curse from God (see Deuteronomy 21:22-23). However, the apostle Paul explains how God took away our sin through Jesus' sacrifice: "Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:7-8). In another of his letters, Paul says, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us" (Galatians 3:13). Jesus told his disciples, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). This is exactly what he did: he gave his own life, so that we could be saved.

The history of God's action in our world is marked by many powerful events in which he turned evil into good. Jacob's son Joseph was tragically sold by his brothers, but God would use Joseph to save his family's lives during a famine. Jesus was crucified, but God used it as a sacrifice that allowed forgiveness. Amidst this pandemic, there is suffering and crisis, but also hope as many people have become open to the Gospel and are seeking God in prayer.



Happening Now:

During the pandemic, there have been frequent reports about the lack of medical equipment available as hospitals fill up with patients. Ventilators that help sick people to breathe are often crucial to survival. The media recently reported about a priest in Italy who gave up his ventilator and asked that it be given to a younger patient. The priest died, but the young person survived.

Have You Thought About...

- In the midst of tragedy, God is still very much at work in visible and invisible ways. Have you experienced God's intervention in a time of crisis?
- Jesus was not afraid to give his life for us. What does this sacrifice mean for you personally today?
- If you had to decide whether to give up your life so that someone else could live, how would you decide?