

GOOD FRIDAY (2022)

As a result of Adam's sin, the human race could no longer live in friendship with God. There was now a great wound, a horrible spiritual injury that we could do nothing about. Furthermore, our own personal sins simply made matters worse. We had put to death our spiritual life, and no payment, no sacrifice, no offering from us could make things right ...

But why? Why couldn't we make things right?

Because sin is not like an offense or a wrong or an injury between two people. Instead, sin is an offense that man commits against His God, and because God is infinite in both glory and majesty, any sin by us is more serious, much more serious in fact, than we could ever comprehend.

And then there is this. God is love. That means sin is not simply disobeying almighty God, the Creator of all things in heaven and on Earth, but sin is also the rejection of love itself.

Now justice demands certain things. To repair the damage done by sin and to restore the relationship between God and man, justice demands a sin offering. However, that offering would have to be an offering worthy of God. It would need to be a gift of infinite value, but none of us has that kind of gift. To put an even finer point on things, all that we do have, everything, has been given to us by God. That means even if we did give something to God, we would only be giving back to Him something He had already given to us.

For centuries, the Israelites sought reconciliation with God. They sought to restore their spiritual lives. On a daily basis, they offered sacrifices in the Temple. They sacrificed bulls, and lambs, and doves and cereal offerings. Teams of priests offered sacrifice after sacrifice, but for all the reasons I have just mentioned, none of these satisfied the debt that was owed.

However, just as a loving father will sometimes pay for damages caused by his son, so too God our loving Father would arrange to pay for the damage caused by our sins, and He would do so by sending to us His beloved Son.

His Son would be our sin offering, but there was a problem with this plan. You see, the Son of God did not have the power to die. Death, which is the separation of body and soul, can only happen to creatures that have a body, and since the Son had no body, He could not die.

So here's the amazing thing. Not only would the Father send His divine Son to restore us to life, but He would also make us part of the solution. Through the Incarnation, the divine Word, He who was, is, and always will be, would take on our human nature. He would become flesh in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. That way, He would be able to offer His life on our behalf. That way, He would be able to die, and furthermore, because He was God, His death would have infinite value and would be holy and pleasing offering to the Father.

This is how the Son would give us life. He would first share with us and then enable us to share with Him. Saint Augustine puts it this way: We gave Jesus Christ the power to die, and by His death He gave us the power to live. This is true love. Love which we in no way deserve. So, as we gaze upon the Cross today, let us be ever grateful for that love and give our own love in return. Amen.