

'CRUCIFIED' HOMILY - 19 June 2016 - (12th Sunday Ordinary Time Year C)

In today's passage we hear that Jesus asks the disciples,

"Who do the crowds say that I am?"

After they answer, Jesus asks them,

"But WHO do YOU say that I AM?"

And Peter answers.

Jesus asks us the same question.

Let us take a moment for each of us to respond quietly to him....

"But WHO do YOU say that I AM?"

(Pause for reflection)

In my pocket I have an iPhone with my notes on it.

The notes list bible passages about 'The Cross'.

I'll read two quotes of St Paul from his Letter to the Galatians:

"I have been crucified with Christ" (Galatians 2/19b)

"May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." (Galatians 6/14).

Like Paul, do we experience that we have been crucified with Christ?

And that the world has been crucified to us?

And that we have been crucified to the world?

If we decide to live in isolation, sheltered from the pain of others, ruled by fear, scared of being involved, running away from life, dreaming only of the deserted island – then maybe we don't understand those questions.

But once we open ourselves to our own pain and the pain of others in our world, we begin to sense a world crucified.

St Paul names the reality.

As we share that pain, we can feel the world crucified to us.

A SOLIDARITY with others.

A sharing in the mission of Jesus.

Jesus died to save us, to redeem us.

Jesus entered the very depths of our pain, reaching out to heal us, to comfort us, to challenge us, to liberate us.

This is not a computer game, where we might sit in a comfortable chair, and control outcomes, compete with someone else in another chair, then switch off and resume life.

The Cross immerses us in the depth of love, the depth of life, the depth of pain, the depth of suffering, the depth of joy, the depth of peace.

Jesus fulfils the depth of his mission in love.

At the 9am Family Mass today the children helped adults to understand more about the cross.

A small group of children and an adult walk up to the crucifix in our Reconciliation Chapel.

We reflect on how the image helps us to reflect on our pain, our sorrow, our desire to be forgiven and healed.

Another small group and an adult walk up to the front windows and draw our attention to the large plain across outside the church.

The front of our church is shaped like a boat with the cross which represents the mast of the boat. Jesus leading the way.

Our high pitched roof represents the sails of a sailing boat, reminding us how the Spirit moves us.

We sail together as a faith community, as Jesus and the early disciples travelled by boat across the Sea of Galilee.

No figure on the cross; the children are asked why. They tell us that Jesus is RISEN.

Then two children come forward to act out what St TERESA of Avila said about the cross. One child looks really glum. The child is shuffling along, pretending to drag the cross along. Feeling hurt.

St Teresa says that those people,

"for the most part, grieve over anything said against them.

They do not embrace the cross but drag it along, and so it hurts and wearies them and breaks them to pieces."

The second child bends down to pick up her own cross and carry it. She has a look of joy on her face.

St Teresa says that,

"if the cross is loved, it is easy to bear."

Both children are thanked for helping us to understand.

Do we DRAG the cross?

or do we lift it up and CARRY it?

Same cross, same weight. Yet it is lighter.

Do we allow others to help carry our cross like Simon the Cyrene did for Jesus?

Do we help to carry the cross of others in solidarity?

Luke Gospel's today tells us that we carry the cross DAILY.

Every day we live our lives, following the Risen Christ.

[Fr. Gerry Hefferan – 'Crucified' – 19 June 2016]

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/061916.cfm>]