

Good Friday B/2018

There are situations in human life where people become speechless and no word comes out of their mouth. Those are situations in which people are overwhelmed and invaded by a feeling so strong that there is nothing to say than to keep silence.

When we listen to the passion of our Lord as proclaimed in tonight's Gospel, we feel that no word, no speech, can replace the vivid drama of the suffering of Jesus. No cry, no tears poured out in compassion of the suffering of Jesus will ever express in the right tone the tragedy of his passion.

Perhaps only a deep sigh of the heart and an interior silence can help us be one with him in his suffering. Where words lose their strength, there only the heart can speak, because only the heart knows the limits of human speech.

The scene of the passion can be approached only from within, when the soul, touched by what our beloved savior accepted to endure for our salvation, comes to understand that there is no greater love than to give one's life for the beloved ones. The Passion and death of Jesus are the proof of his love for us and for the whole of mankind. By his teachings and actions, Jesus has touched the lives of many, but he also made enemies.

Jesus certainly saw his violent death coming on the horizon. He knew that his fate would not be different from that of the prophets who came before him and who were persecuted. Those who felt challenged in their behavior and their way of believing in God could not stand his teachings and his actions. They wanted him to die and to leave them alone with their ways of life.

But Jesus did not fear for his own life. He assumed everything with courage, faithfulness and obedience in order to fulfill the mission the Father had entrusted to him. As Isaiah says, "Though he was harshly treated, he submitted and opened not his mouth; like a lamb led to the slaughter or a sheep before the shearers, he was silent and opened not his mouth". And yet, "it was our infirmities that he bore, our sufferings that he endured... He was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins; upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed".

The Passion and death of Jesus are the decisive moments of his life that reveal who he is and what he did for our salvation. Jesus has accepted suffering in his body and the death on the cross in order to save us. His death is an expression of his love for us, a self-gift and a self-immolation for our sake. By so doing, Jesus becomes "the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him".

As we meditate on the Passion of Jesus, let us not forget that he endured all that suffering for our sins. What a more wonderful way to make amends than to repent of our sins and to receive God's grace through the sacrament of confession. May the Passion of our Lord bring us to repentance and conversion of heart so that we come to the celebration of Easter purified and cleansed from our sins! May the Lord help us to grow in faith by dedicating our lives for the good of our fellows, as he did, and by continuing to love his creation and our world! May God bless you all!

Isaiah 52: 13-53: 12; Hebrews 4: 14-16; 5: 7-9; John 18: 1-19: 42

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Contact: www.mbala.org

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