

RCIA: Symbolon Lesson 6

The Paschal Mystery

- **Opening Prayer:** Psalm 22: 1-22

Note: Ps 22 is one of the most important of the messianic psalms. Our Lord himself on the cross repeated its first line, and several other verses are directly quoted, or at least alluded to, in the New Testament as pertaining to His Passion...the entire psalm has been traditionally interpreted in the Catholic Church as referring to Christ. The psalmist, therefore, speaks in Christ's name when in the first section (2-22) he describes the Messiah's sufferings, together with his unshaken confidence in the heavenly Father (10-12, 20-22), and in the second part, the fruits of his redemption (23-32).

- **Song:** They'll Know We are Christians (585)

- **Catechism references for further reflection:**

- Value of Christ's sacrifice: CCC 616-617
- The Descent into hell: CCC 632-635
- Meaning of the Resurrection: CCC 651-655
- Our participation in Christ's sacrifice: CCC 618

- **Questions for Discussion:**

- Why do you think the Cross is the most common symbol of Christianity? Why not the empty tomb?
- The speaker on the video sees the Cross as the greatest sign of God's love. Do you agree? Why might this be so?
- What does it mean to "take up your cross"? How do you do that practically in your life?
- Why do Catholics talk about "participating in Christ's suffering" and "offering our sufferings up" to God? Isn't Jesus' death the only sacrifice needed?
- How does Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection affect our relationship with God? How might it give meaning to the suffering we experience in our life?

- **Weekly Gospel Reading: 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Luke 18: 9-14)**

Jesus addressed this parable
to those who were convinced of their own righteousness
and despised everyone else.

"Two people went up to the temple area to pray;
one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector.
The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself,
'O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity --
greedy, dishonest, adulterous -- or even like this tax collector.
I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income.'
But the tax collector stood off at a distance
and would not even raise his eyes to heaven
but beat his breast and prayed,
'O God, be merciful to me a sinner.'
I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former;
for whoever exalts himself will be humbled,
and the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

Lectio Divina

1. **Lectio:** Read the passage slowly, perhaps several times. Let a phrase or two catch your attention.
2. **Meditatio:** Reflect on the meaning of the words you have chosen. How is God speaking to you through this reading?
3. **Oratio:** Raise your mind and heart to God, using the message of this reading.
4. **Contemplatio:** Rest quietly in the presence of God.
5. **Actio:** Resolve to change your life in some positive way.

- **Closing Prayer:**

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou amongst women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.