

# LIFE IN CHRIST

A PREACHED RETREAT BY FR. RANIERO CANTALAMESSA

## SESSION 3: JESUS' SUFFERING FOR OUR SINS

A. Paul preaches the Kerygma ("Christ Jesus was put to death for our sins and raised to life to justify us." - Romans 4:25)

- The Kerygma (Greek for proclamation) is the preaching of the gospel message.
- There is no condemnation in Christ Jesus because of His death for our sins.
- We have been reconciled to God by the death of Jesus Christ.

*"We were still helpless when at his appointed moment Christ died for sinful men. It is not easy to die even for a good man – though of course for someone really worthy, a man might be prepared to die –but what proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners. Having died to make us righteous, is it likely that he would now fail to save us from God's anger? When we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, we were still enemies; now that we have been reconciled, surely we may count on being saved by the life of his Son? Not merely because we have been reconciled but because we are filled with joyful trust in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have already gained our reconciliation." -Romans 5:6-11*

B. Three "stations" of the inner passion of the soul of Jesus

### 1. The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane

*"They came to a small estate called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, 'Stay here while I pray'. Then he took Peter and James and John with him. And a sudden fear came over him, and great distress. And he said to them, 'My soul is sorrowful to the point of death. Wait here, and keep awake.' And going on a little further he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, this hour might pass him by. 'Abba!' he said 'Everything is possible for you. Take this cup away from me. But let it be as you, not I, would have it.'"*

-Mark 14:32-36

- Jesus experienced extreme distress in the garden because He took the crushing weight of the world's sin on Himself.
- The "cup" Jesus referred to is the anger of God against the sins of the world, which He bore in his heart.
- Jesus experienced what the mystics refer to as "the dark night of the spirit" - He felt the absence of God the Father.
- Despite the anguish Jesus faced, He kept His trust and confidence in God the Father.

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### 2. Jesus in the praetorium before Pontius Pilate

*"The soldiers led him away to the inner part of the palace, that is, the Praetorium, and called the whole cohort together. They dressed him up in purple, twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on him. And they began saluting him, 'Hail, king of the Jews!' They struck his head with a reed and spat on him; and they went down on their knees to do him homage. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the purple and dressed him in his own clothes." -Mark 15:16-20*

- In the Flemish painting "Seeing Salvation," Jesus is weeping not for himself, but for us, for all sinners.
- Jesus freely submitted to the Father's will.
- Jesus gives us the perfect example of submission to God.

### 3. Calvary

- At Calvary, we see the extreme embodiment of what Jesus felt at Gethsemane.
- Jesus experienced the silence of God, felt rejected and abandoned by God; however, He continued to trust in the Father.
- Calvary ended in victory, not defeat.
- Jesus died saying, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." -Luke 23:46
- Jesus is the "Great Amen" and said amen on humanity's behalf. Jesus' obedience is the rock of our salvation.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What stood out to you from the talk?
2. What is the kerygma? How would you explain the kerygma to someone?
3. Share your thoughts on the 3 stations of the inner passion of the soul of Jesus.
4. Have you experienced "the silence of God?" What can you share about the experience?
5. Is submission to God easy or difficult for you? Why?
6. Have you faced suffering that tempted you to stop trusting in God? If so, what did you do?
7. What can the way Jesus faced persecution teach us?
8. How does the knowledge that Jesus died for you make you feel?