

THOUGHTS FOR HOLY WEEK

In these difficult times, all of us are undergoing, in a small way, our own Passion. Let us unite our sufferings with those of Christ for the salvation and transformation of the world.

Each day of this special week we might spend a little time in prayer, asking God to keep us safe and full of hope in this time of darkness. We pray also that the crisis will be a prelude to a new dawn in the Church and in Society, where all of us will be more caring and more God-centered in the way we live our lives.

Let's pray also during this week that Jesus' Passion and Death will bring consolation and healing to those who are suffering, in so many different ways, from the effects of the coronavirus scourge. We pray also for those who are giving themselves so generously to the work of helping victims and their families.

To help us pray this week I offer some lines of reflection in the following passages from the Gospels. These are among my own favourite passages, but you may prefer others.

- 1. Jesus' Agony in the Garden – (**Matthew 26: 36-46**). Think of Jesus shedding tears of blood as he thought of what lay ahead of him in the next few hours. Let us try to feel as Jesus felt – not only because of the physical suffering that was imminent, but also the shame and humiliation of it all, as he faced the scoffing crowds that had given him such a jubilant welcome a few days earlier.*
- 2. Jesus' words on the Cross: 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me'. (**Matthew 27: 46**). Jesus' physical suffering was great, but so was his mental suffering. Feel with Jesus as he felt totally abandoned, not only by his followers (except for Mary and John, and a few women), but also by his Father. He felt that his life and mission was a total failure – and yet we now know it was the most fruitful moment of his life – a moment that transformed the world and made death the gateway to eternal life of us all.*
- 3. I strongly recommend we read **Chapters 13 to 17 of John's Gospel**. In this account of Jesus' last hours with his disciples we feel all the intensity and passion of his love for us, which prompted him to go to the extremes of giving his life for us. It's a love we commemorate and celebrate each time we come to Mass.*

Let us remain together in prayer

Fr. Frank