



Acts of Compassion – Day by Day

Lent - Passion Sunday

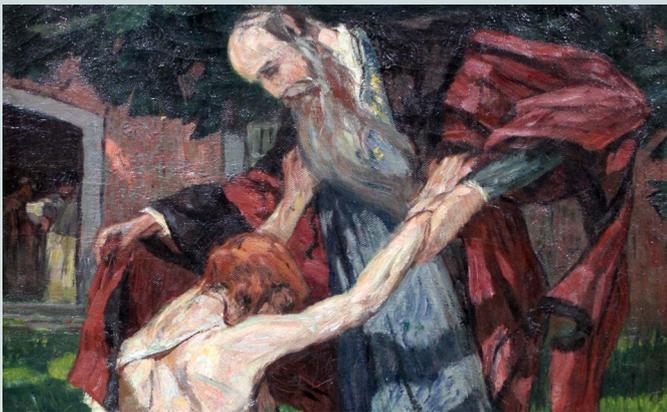
TAKE
HOME

Lent is a time to acknowledge the crosses of others, even while we carry our own.

In the midst of his own agony, Jesus' interaction with the thief on the cross is one of mercy and compassion.

Consider this story:

A young man had been arrested for stealing from the royal palace twice. Sentenced to hang, the boy's mother sought mercy from Napoleon on behalf of her son. Napoleon answered the mother's plea, "This boy has stolen from my palace twice now; he deserves justice and that justice is death." The mother replied, "But I don't ask for justice, your highness. I seek mercy." "He does not deserve mercy," replied Napoleon. The mother passionately begged, "It would not be mercy if he deserved it." Touched by the mother's grief and passion, Napoleon consented and released the boy.



*"If we truly believe that all is Christ, would we continue to crucify Christ?
Or would we act according to the law of Jesus: love, mercy and compassion?
Would we be willing to lay down our lives out of love for the sake of the other?
If we truly believed that Christ is centre of the universe,
would we be so private about the good news we hold so sacred?"*

Ilia Delio, *The Humility of God: A Franciscan Perspective*, (p130).

At some point we need to acknowledge that we are not worthy of God's love. It is pure gift, offered freely.

At the beginning of our Lenten journey, you were invited to gaze upon yourself the way God does – in love and compassion. The Passion invites us to gaze upon ourselves again in the light of the 'God who bends low in reckless love'. God's love for us is big love ... how do we embrace that more fully in our lives as we prepare to enter the Easter season?

- What do we need to die to?
- What do we need to leave behind in the tomb?
- What do we need to commend to God?

Joseph of Arimathea was moved to be gracious and compassionate towards Jesus, even in death. He was a member of the council and yet stood aside to take a step towards Jesus. He also gave something that had cost him and that in his own way he desired.

- What can we offer to Jesus who gives everything for us?
- How can we be the face of God to others around us?