

Church of the Good Shepherd
and
St. John the Evangelist

Good Friday
March 21, 2008
Fr Bill McGinty

Good Friday Means...

Some one sent me an e-mail to say that the words "Good Friday" mean "God Speed" and we should celebrate this with feasting. I wrote back to say it means nothing of the kind. If Good Friday means anything it is that Jesus Christ the Son of God died for our sins upon a cross and in doing so brought about our salvation. What does that mean? It means that today we should stand at the foot of his cross and thank God for the gift of this grace.

Today is a day of remembrance. It is a day that we reverence the wood of Christ's cross. The regard that we hold this day in is shrouded in deep respect for its holiness.

Today the church is stripped to the bone, with only this wooden cross to remind us of Jesus' sacrifice for us. On this day, we should walk in silence through the streets to tell the world that in dying Christ showed us how to face rejection, failure, ridicule and scorn.

Today the cross reminds us that its meaning is more powerful than the gun or any weapon. It invites us to live by its example for each and every day of our year. So it was that Melinda Merchant found herself at Sloan Kettering on this Good Friday, with only her faith to hold on to, she has been hoping for no more than the good news of hope. At its best that good news arrived today, from her oncologist who told her: "Your cancer is treatable but not curable. What we can offer you is a way to irradiate the pain so you can be with us for some time to come."

The long term prognosis for you and I is also that one day we will seek to join the Lord in death. It is a journey that none of us looks forward to. Yet Christ's cross teaches us that we should not fear the coming of that good night. It is why we came into this world, that we might live for his Kingdom, die in his faith and rise to new life eternal, through the grace he has won for us.

It is the ultimate test of our faith, that we believe in this the darkest of days that Christ hanging dead upon the cross, buried in the tomb, rose again after three days.

All our hope. All our eternity rests in that belief. As we leave the church contemplating these doctrines of our faith let us resolve that in the next year we will hold aloft the cross as a symbol of our faith and esteem it for all to see.

Amen+

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