

April 14, 2017 – Good Friday– Cycle A

Fr. Larry Richards

How are you? Blessed! Today of all days we are most blessed because Jesus died on the cross for the love of us. This past week I got a text from a friend of mine. I just want to, it's a pretty simple text, this guy is named Andy and he says, "Father my five year old son wants to know why we call it Good Friday, when it was a bad day. Is there an easy way to explain it?" I just responded "Of course, it is the greatest day because it is the greatest day ever, because Jesus died for our sins, so that we could live with Him forever." This is what Good Friday is about, it's so the God of the Universe loves us so much that He dies, not just to take away our sins, but so we could be with Him forever, how much does He love us.

So I want to do a reflection, on just one thing, the words "I thirst." It's not my reflection, it is Mother Theresa's reflection. And so it's just how God thirsts for us, as we talked about at the Passion Talk the other night, is how God thirsts for us. So in this time, instead of looking for me, is I want you to close your eyes, and listen to the meditation, can you do that? Yes, Father, so listen now to the meditation.

"Behold I stand at the door and knock, it is true, I stand at the door of your heart, day and night, even when you're not listening, even when you doubt it could be me. I am there, I wait for even the smallest sound of your response, even the least whispered invitation that would allow me to enter into you. I want you to know that whenever you invite me, I do come always, without fail, silent and unseen I come, that with infinite power and love, and bringing the many gifts of my Spirit, I come with my mercy. With my desire to forgive you and heal you. With the love with you beyond comprehension, a love every bit as great, as a love I receive from my Father. As the Father has loved me, as I have loved you. I come longing to console you and give you my strength. To lift you up and bind all your wounds. I bring you my light to dispel all your darkness and all your doubts. I come with my power that I may carry you and all your burdens, with my grace to touch your heart and transform your life. My peace, I give to still your soul, I know you through and through. I know everything about you, the very hairs on your head I have numbered.

Nothing in your life is unimportant to me, I have followed you through the years and I have always loved you, even in your wanderings. I know everyone of your problems, I know your needs, I know your worries, and yes I know everyone of your sins. But I tell you again that I love you, not for what you have or haven't done. I love you for you, for the beauty and the dignity that my Father gave you. By creating you in our own image. It is a dignity that you have often forgotten. A beauty that you have tarnished by sin, but I love you as you are. I have shed my blood to win you back. If only you have asked me by faith, my grace will touch all that is in your life. I will give you the strength to free yourself from sin, and all its destructive power. I know what is in your heart, I know your loneliness and all your hurts. I know your rejections, the judgments, the humiliations. I carried it all before you and I carried it all for you. So that you may share my strength and my victory. I know especially your need for love, how you thirsted to

be loved and cherished and how often you have thirsted in vain, by seeking that love selfishly, by seeking for that love inside of you with passing pleasures. With the ever even greater emptiness of sin.

Do you thirst for love? Come to me all you who thirst and I will satisfy you and fill you. Do you thirst to be cherished? I cherish you more than you could imagine, to the point of dying on the cross for you. I thirst for you. Yes, that's the only way to begin to describe my love for you. I thirst for you. I thirst to love you and to be loved by you. That is how precious you are to me. I thirst for you. Come to me and I fill your heart and I will heal your wound. I will make you a new creation and I will give you peace. Even in your trials, I thirst for you. You must never doubt my mercy, my acceptance of you. My desire to forgive you, my longing to bless you and live my life in you.

I thirst for you, if you feel unimportant in the eyes of the world, which matters not at all. For me there is no one more important, in the entire world than you. I thirst for you, open to me. Come to me, thirst for me. Give me your life and I will prove to you how important you are to my heart. Don't you realize that my Father already has a perfect plan to transform your life, beginning from this moment? Trust in me. Ask me every day to enter and take charge of your life. And I will. I promise you before my Father in heaven that I will work miracles in your life. Why would I do this? Because I thirst for you. All I ask of you is that you entrust yourself into me, completely. I will do all the rest that I even now behold the place that my Father has prepared for you in my Kingdom. Remember you are a pilgrim in this life that is on a journey home. Sin can never satisfy you or bring you the peace you seek. All that you have sought outside of me has left you emptier. Do not cling to the things of this life. Above all do not run from me when you fall. But come to me without delay, when you give to me your sin, you give the joy of being your Savior. It is nothing that I cannot forgive and heal, so come, unburden your soul. No matter how far you may wander, no matter how often you forget me, no matter how many crosses you may bear in this life, there is one thing I always want you to remember, one thing that will never change... I thirst for you. Just as you are. You don't need to change to believe in my love. For it's all the belief in my love will change you. You forget me but I am seeking you every moment of the day, standing at the door of your heart and knocking.

Do you find this hard to believe? Just look at my cross, look at my heart that was pierced for you. Have you not understood my cross? Listen again to the words I spoke there for they tell you clearly why I endured all this for you: I thirst. Yes, I thirst for you. As the rest of the psalm verse says of me, I looked for love and I found none. All my life I have been looking for your love. I have never stopped seeking your love. To be loved by you. You have tried many other things in your search for happiness, why not try opening your heart to me? Right now, more than you ever have before. Whenever you do open the door of your heart, whenever you come close enough, you will have heard me say, to you again and again. Not in your words, but in your spirit, no matter what you have done, I love you for your own sake. Come to me with your misery and your sin, with your troubles and your needs, with your longing to be loved, I stand at the door of your heart and I knock. Open to me for I thirst for you."

Every time we mediate with Jesus on the cross, He says the same thing, I thirst for you. All that Jesus asks from you is that you and me, this Good Friday, is to thirst for Him, to open

our heart to Him, to let Him into our heart and our life to take control. Let this be the Good Friday that you let go, completely and totally surrender, to Him. To find the time to completely and totally surrender to Him.

May each of you know His love today and forever, Amen.