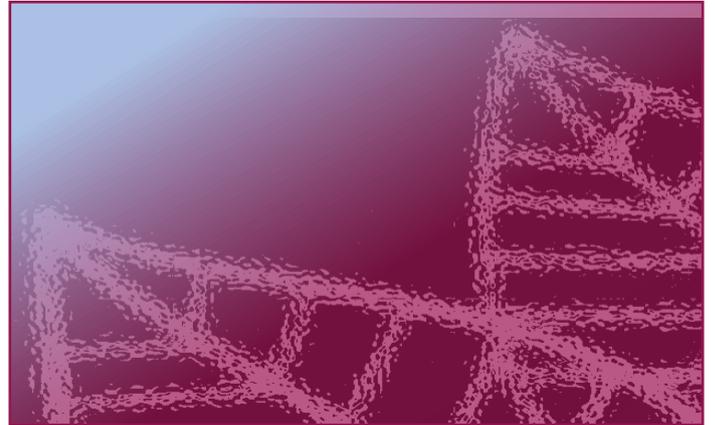


This is my body  
given for you

**Holy Week**

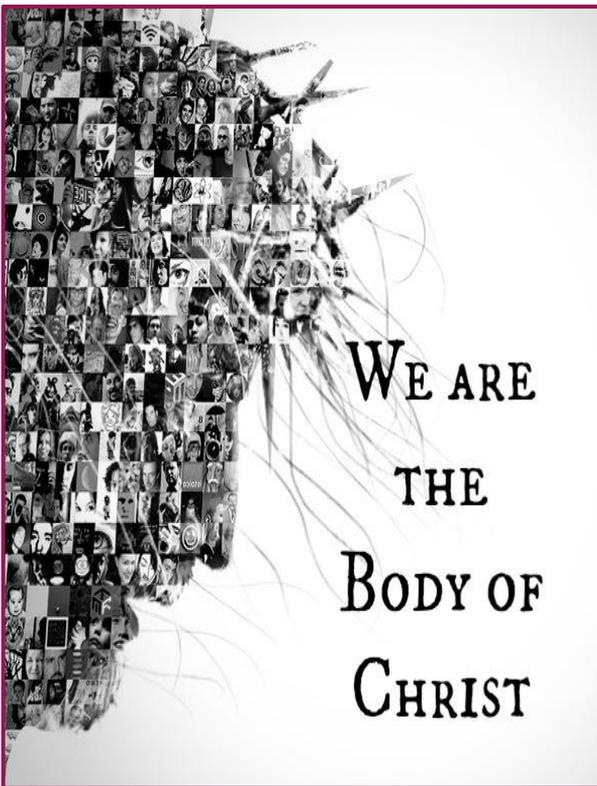
2020 CEDP EASTER REFLECTION



## Introduction

### Living the Easter Message 2020

This year we prepare to commemorate the central mystery of our Christian faith: the death and resurrection of Jesus within the context of a wounded and vulnerable global community. Presently, we are being awakened to the reality of our human connectedness which transcends national and global boundaries. The paradox “we are one, but we are many”, is understood and realised as we witness the spread of the life-threatening Covid-19 virus.



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### Let us pray

Lord Jesus, you truly contain within your gentleness, your humanity all the unyielding immensity and grandeur of our universe. We love you, Lord Jesus because of the multitude who shelter within you and whom, if one clings closely to you, we can hear with all other beings murmuring, praying and weeping. We pray that as we enter into the remembrance of these Easter mysteries, we may deepen our awareness of your embodied presence in all that is. We make our prayer through the power of your spirit alive in us. Amen.

From the earliest days of our Christian faith, the human community was referred to as the **Body of Christ**. This image was first documented in St. Paul's letter to the Christians living in the Greek city of Corinth. Throughout the centuries the concept of the living body of Christ has come to be front and centre as we realise the presence of Christ alive in the midst of all that is.

This reflection and prayer focuses on the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus, the one who animates the Body of Christ. It offers us a way to find meaning at this time of the global pandemic in the context of our Christian faith founded on and in God who is LOVE.

Our opening prayer is adapted from one of the published texts of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. It was written during Easter Week of 1916 amidst the terrible battles of the First World

**From Isolation to Contemplation - From Isolation to Contemplation**

## Holy Thursday

This day remembers Jesus sharing his last meal with his friends, his disciples. During this gathering Jesus said the words which Christians down through the centuries proclaim and live:

***'This is my Body given for you.'***

You are invited to follow this prayer through the link below. It is titled The Eucharistic Prayer of the Cosmos written by Fr. Sean O'Laoire. As you enter into this prayer allow yourself to be awakened to the presence of Christ's body in all that is.

### **Eucharistic Prayer of the Cosmos**

### **Let us pray**

We call to mind all in our community, our world who at this moment are working to bring healing to the deeply wounded Body of Christ.

1. For Pope Francis as he brings words of hope, comfort and support to all those who are experiencing suffering and loss at this time. May he be strengthened in his work of inspiring others to reach out in love and compassion to the sick, the vulnerable and those isolated in our world. Lord hear us.

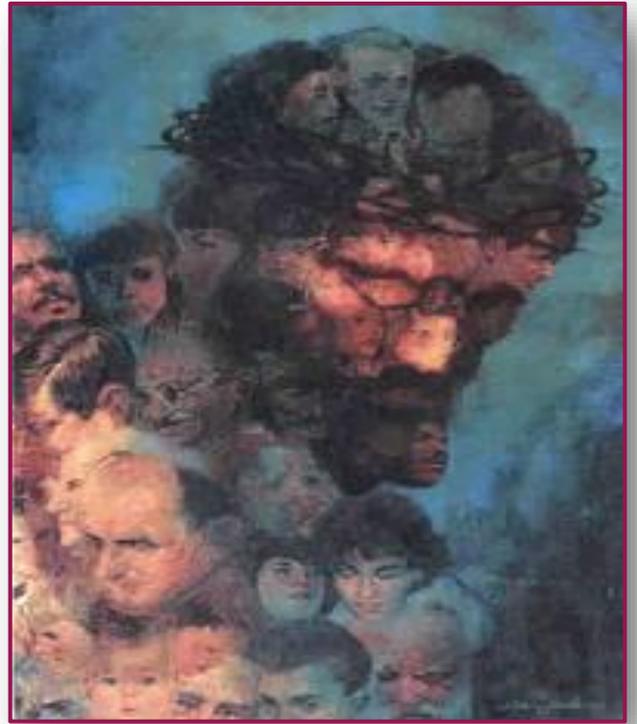
**Lord hear our prayer**

2. For our National and State leaders who are working hard to encourage the human community to collectively embrace the task of saving lives and livelihoods. May they be sustained with all the energy and vision that is required at this critical time. Lord hear us.

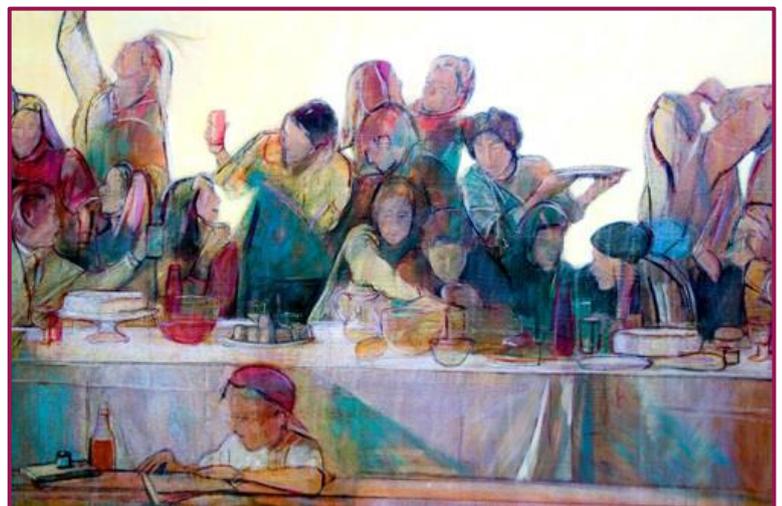
**Lord hear our prayer**

3. We remember at this time all those throughout the world who are working in the front line of the Covid -19 pandemic. In the care of the sick they risk their bodies for the sake of the lives of others. May they receive the strength and insight needed to minister with skill and compassion. Lord hear us.

**Lord hear our prayer**



***In His image* by William Zdinak**



***Last Supper* by Phillip Smeeton**

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## Good Friday

Our hearts are bruised by the brutality of this day. To read about or watch a Good Friday re-enactment can even be difficult. Imagine standing on the sidelines and witnessing these actual events unfold before you. Did any of the onlookers, the disciples, Simon of Cyrene, Veronica (source Acta Sanctorum) or the Women from Jerusalem contemplate the gift that was being offered for them by Jesus?

Within this suffering Jesus had been almost completely isolated from those he cared about. Standing at the foot of the cross was the disciple John, 'Jesus' mother Mary and his mother's sister, Mary wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene.' (John 19:25). Everyone else responded by staying away. Mary must have had feelings of helplessness at not being able to stop her son's suffering.

Watching someone we love follow a path that can lead to hurt and suffering is very difficult. Letting go can also be painful but sometimes we have to trust that God holds us close even when we feel isolated and alone.

Edward Sri in his book, 'Walking with Mary', reminds us that throughout her life, Mary had been called to abandon herself to God's plan on many occasions. Here was a journey that saw Mary face humiliation, poverty and on Good Friday the rejection and torturous death of her beloved son. Like the Yes of Mary, the Yes that we are called to give to God is answered in both the challenging and the ordinary moments of our life. As you reflect upon the Stations of the Cross, recognise the gift that Jesus gave for us on this day. Like Mary, welcome into your hearts the song of love that God brings to all of us. **Stations of the Cross**

### Let us pray

My soul magnifies the Lord  
and my spirit rejoices in God,  
the source of my becoming.

He invites me to a  
place of contemplation so that  
I may learn a new song.

Behold, I will seek and celebrate  
His Word in all that lays before me.

My heart is content knowing that  
the cross was given in our name.

He calls my hands to be filled with  
love and compassion,

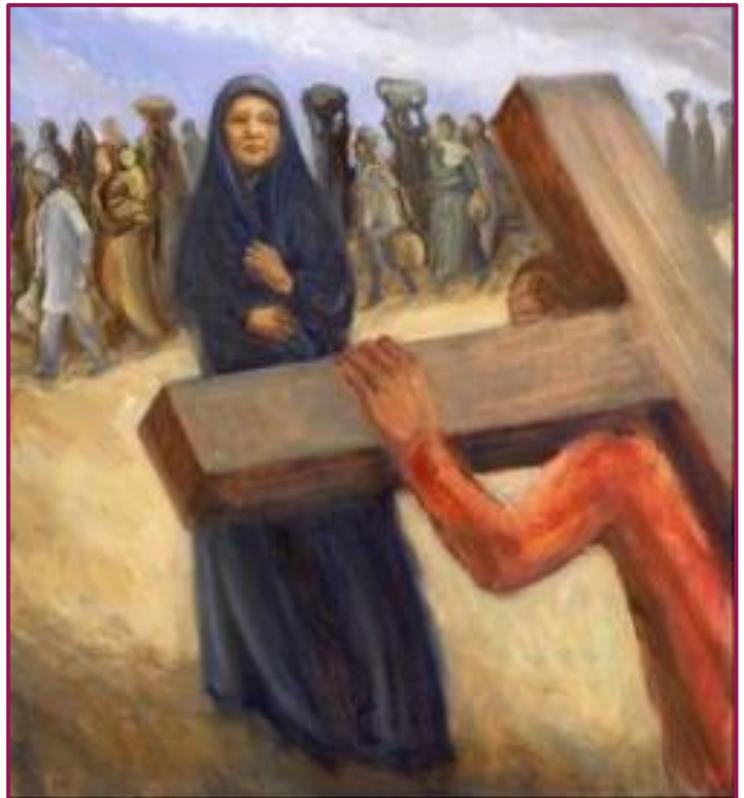
Holy be His name.

His strength abounds within me as  
I walk a path that will always  
dance to His will.

His mercy and peace lives within me.

I will sing His song.

Amen



**Station IV Jesus meets his Mother**

**Based on a photo of a mother at vigil outside the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq**

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## Holy Saturday

This is a day or a time of waiting. Our time of self-isolation in staying at home is akin to the “Holy Saturday Time.” It is an “in between” space as we all wait for the corona virus to lessen its power of contagion within our communities. We all wait for healing, for a restoration of the body of humanity which we, as people of faith, honour as the body of Christ.

We wait, as did the apostles and the first disciples of Jesus, in silence. However, because we are people of hope we wait in an empowering silence. It is a silence that will generate new life. Jesus described this waiting in silence and darkness in the parable of the wheat grain falling into the ground and dying – buried so that new life can generate from it (John 12:24).

Noel Davis assists our reflection at this time in his verse:

### ***Empowering Silence***

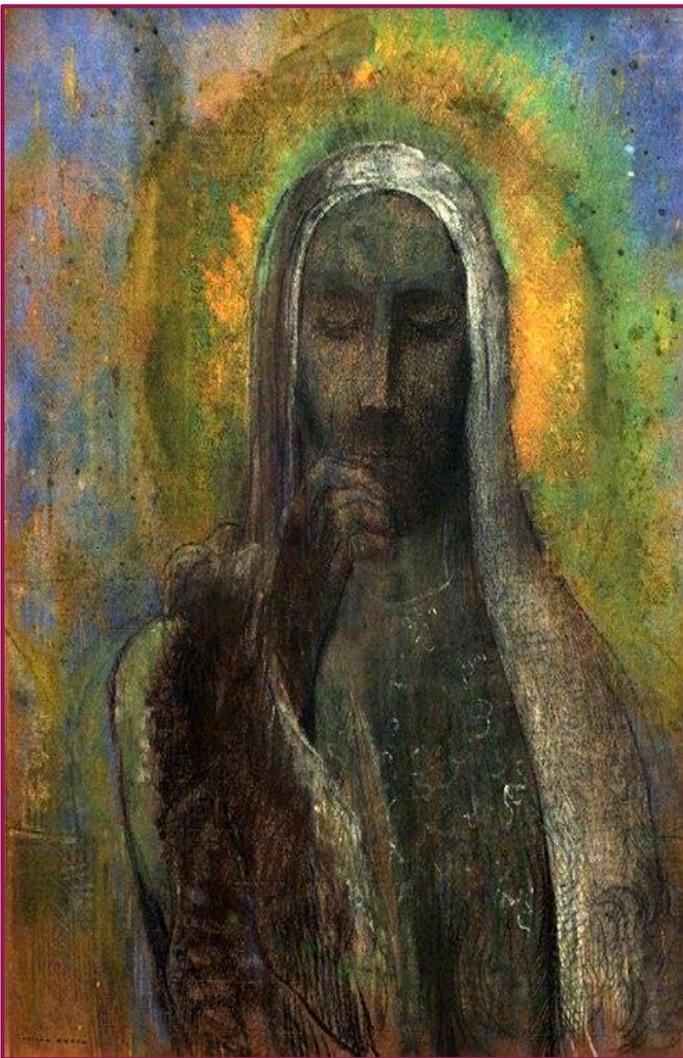
As we enter into the silence  
and surrender to its embrace  
the silence strengthens us  
quietens our doubting  
lifts our confidence  
opens our hearts  
and loosens our attachment  
to the pursuits of ego.

In time the silence draws us deeper  
deep into the stillness  
into the spirit of our integrating self  
to be one with the heart of Life.

It enables us to hold fast  
in our pain, anxiety, times of onslaught  
to remain present with another  
in life’s woundings and the breakdown  
of control.

Empowering silence motivates us to  
move forward  
with renewed vigour and trust  
to live a life of freedom, courage and  
fulfilment  
in choosing the Way of the Spirit.

***Noel Davis – Heart Coming Home***



***The Christ of Silence***  
by Odilon Redon

## Easter Sunday

The stone is rolled away, the tomb is opened. We are invited into this space to embrace new life. How do we do this?



**The Empty Tomb of Jesus' (Shutterstock)**

We do this as a Eucharistic community in an unfolding universe. We remember the words of Jesus recorded in St. Matthew's gospel: "Where two or more are gathered in my name, in my Love, there I am in the midst of them." (Mathew 18:20).

The bringing together of diverse elements, people, ideas, values, traditions, in the breaking of bread and the sharing of wine, tasting together to the fullness of life, Jesus is present in our midst as life itself. We rise up together beyond the resistant forces around us and within us: this is the Body of Christ. "Christ has no body now but yours." Listen now to the Prayer of St. Teresa of Avila who calls us all to be the Body of Christ using the Video link below.

**[St Teresa's Prayer](#)**

## Final Prayer

At present we are all struggling to breathe life into our wounded, contagious world. We ask you Lord to gather all peoples, all creatures, all that exists, into a new unity which respects the interconnectedness of all of life.

May we become a new earth community founded in love and built on love, as we seek your ever abiding presence.

Glory to God source of all being, eternal Word, Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

**Amen**



***Allegory of the Resurrection  
of Jesus Christ***  
by Patrick Devonas

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