

Eight Station of the Cross Jesus meets the holy women

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As Jesus gazed on the supporting, sorrowing women on His way to Calvary, I wonder did He look down through the ages and see the suffering and pain of generations when He prayed “weep not for me but for yourselves and for your children” These women probably had cared for Him during His ministry and were well known by Him.

“During the life-time of the Savior, women took a full part in the work of evangelization, not only in good times, but-in this showing greater faithfulness than the men-in the darkest hours of the passion, death and burial of the Savior.

Vatican Council 11, Vol. 11 pg. 320

Today we are aware of the horrific suffering in the world, the brutality of war, the horror of human trafficking, the shame and suffering of child abuse and gender based violence, the injustices of dictatorships, destruction of forest lands, pollution of the sea and fresh waters of the world. The list is endless and all cause unimaginable suffering to individuals, families and communities. Everyone and everything that God created is good and perfect, so why the present sorrowful state of existence in so many areas of our beautiful world? Should the present pandemic be an awakening call to us all to assess our way of living, the living out of our mission, our vocation?

“A sense of deep communion with the rest of nature cannot be real if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern for our fellow human beings”
Pope Francis..

All of the above is to be regretted but we can take hope from the fact that along aside all this suffering there are people who are active and courageous in their mission to combat/conquer these evils and to bring healing and peace in place of the suffering. There are the front line workers in the Health Services and many other staff of community services who have worked tirelessly to care for the sick or carrying out spraying etc. to limit transmission of the virus, putting their own lives at risk, not counting the cost (the true mark of vocation). It was good to see their

dedication was recognized by the weekly clapping in which heads of governments, neighbors, and friends all took part to show their appreciation of their heroic efforts. There are numerous courageous human rights activities all over the world challenging unjust laws, human rights violations, corruption, human trafficking and deforestation, to name but a few, to give back to society the peace and tranquility of Christian living.

Humankind was given the earth “to care for it and to till it” but what is happening today? Our precious forests are being pillaged by greedy business enterprises for financial gain with the dreadful consequences of climate change leading to natural disasters claiming innocent lives, crop failure causing hunger and in some cases depriving indigenous people of their ancestral land. Seas and fresh waters are being polluted, yes, by big industrial companies but some of the pollution is by us, when we carelessly dispose of plastics and other materials/substances which find their way into the waters polluting them. Over the years we have been given simple reminders of how to care for the earth, spare paper and power, no burning of rubbish, save and plant trees but have we really take heed?

“Each community can take from the bounty of the earth whatever it needs for substance, but it also has the duty to protect the earth and to ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations” Pope Francis.

We are blessed to have Pope Francis who delivers some of his teaching in simple short messages but are loaded with good moral and Christian values to guide us. He not only delivers these teachings, he lives by example, showing his concern for refugees, prisoners and his non condemning attitude, urging everyone to return to God to experience His love and Mercy. We are also aware of his desire that we care for the earth which he calls “our common home” in Laudato Si.

Fr Selvam in his talks is asking us to become seekers, entering deeper into the spirit of Religious Life, “to live our lives intensely around the gospel”

The challenge to us to respond whole heartedly is great and daunting, so we have to place our trust in Our Lord’s promise that He is with us until the end of time.

“This day is sacred to the Lord. Do not be sad: the joy of the Lord is your strength”