



## Good Friday



**Date:** Friday, April 18, 2025 | **Season:** Sacred Paschal Triduum | **Year:** C

**First Reading:** Isaiah 52:13–53

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 31:2, 6, 12–13, 15–17, 25 | **Response:** Luke 23:46

**Second Reading:** Hebrews 4:14–16, 5:7–9

**Gospel Acclamation:** Philippians 2:8–9

**Gospel Reading:** John 18:1–19

**Preached at:** the Chapel of the Most Holy Name, Kolvenbach House in the Archdiocese of Lusaka, Zambia.

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**D**ear brothers and sisters,

Today, we are invited not only to speak about the Cross, but to stand before it.

The readings, the silences, the solemn intercessions, and the veneration that follows—these do not need embellishment. They are the Church’s way of drawing us into the deepest mystery of our faith: the love of God poured out, not in triumphal display, but in the suffering and death of Jesus Christ.

In John’s Gospel, Jesus is no passive victim. He is in control—calm, deliberate, resolute. He speaks with Pilate, not with fear, but with truth. “For this I was born,” he says, “to bear witness to the truth.” Pilate, like so many leaders before and since, responds not with understanding, but with cynicism: “What is truth?”

This scene echoes in our world today. The temptation to redefine truth according to convenience, power, or political gain is all too familiar. Yet Jesus stands firm. And in doing so, He shows us the true vocation of every human being: to bear witness to the truth, even when the world cannot bear to hear it.

Then comes the moment of total surrender. “It is finished.” Not a cry of defeat, but a declaration of completion. Jesus hands over his spirit. And from his pierced side flow water and blood—baptism and Eucharist—the birth of the Church. The Lamb of God, whole and unbroken, gives His life freely.

And still, He thinks not of Himself, but of others. From the cross, He entrusts His mother to the Beloved Disciple. “Behold your son... behold your mother.” Even in dying, He creates a new community of love.

This liturgy invites us to remain close to that moment—not as spectators, but as disciples. To be there with Mary, with the Beloved Disciple. To resist the temptation to flee. To listen. To receive. To love.

So today, let us not rush to Easter. Let us remain with Christ in His suffering. Let us stand with the crucified of our own time—in the poor, the wounded, the abandoned. In the faces of those who suffer here in Zambia, and in all places where injustice and pain persist. Let us practice the truth, even when it costs us.

And let us remember that the Cross is not the end. It is the door. The door that opens to resurrection and to a new way of living—where love conquers hate, justice overcomes oppression, and death gives way to eternal life. The Cross is not just a symbol of Christ’s sacrifice, but the gateway through which we are called to follow, bear witness to the truth, and live in the hope of the resurrection.

Let us now return to silence—where God will speak more than our words can say. And when the silence has done its work in us, may we rise—ready to live for the truth, to stand with the suffering, to love without fear.

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In preparing this homily, I consulted various resources to deepen my understanding of today's readings, including using Magisterium AI for assistance. The final content remains the responsibility of the author.