

GOOD FRIDAY
APRIL 6, 2007

1

It happens in every special relationship. There comes a time when it is necessary to go beyond words, and let actions speak. In the lexicon of today, this is time when we move beyond "Talking the walk" to "Walking the talk". On this Good Friday Jesus has arrived at that moment in his relationship with us.

Up until today there has been a plethora of words from the lips of Jesus. These words evoke love, encouragement and challenge. Today, however, on the wood of the cross Jesus demonstrates his love for us. This compelling action by Jesus takes us beyond words, too, in our relationship with Jesus. The prophet Isaiah in today's first reading acknowledges this wordless sense when he says "...because of him kings shall stand speechless; for those who have not been told shall see, those who have not heard shall ponder it."

Today everyone who ascribes to be Christian sees and everyone ponders, and in the absence of words we turn to actions as well to show our love and solidarity with Jesus. For we are not innocent bystanders in a passion play, but active participants in this holy drama. In a few moments, the very cross that stands at the center of our worship will be carried down the aisle and every single one of us will have the opportunity to come forward and venerate this sacred wood on which hung the savior of the world.

The veneration of the cross is an action that takes us beyond words in our relationship with Jesus. The action can be a deep gaze with our eyes, a prayerful touch with our hand or a loving respectful kiss with our lips. While any, and or all of these actions pale in comparison to the sacrificial redeeming action of Jesus, they are heartfelt nonetheless. Implicit within our action is the realization of our own struggles, sorrows and concerns.

In my office I have a vast array of crosses that adorn a whole wall. Actually, I have so many I started another wall. Recently I received a cross from someone with a poem "Hang it on the Cross"

If you have a secret sorrow,
A burden or loss,
An aching need for healing...
Hang it on the cross,
If worry steals your sleep
And makes you toss and turn
If your heart is feeling heavy...
Hang it on the cross
Every obstacle to faith or doubt
You come across
Every prayer unanswered...
Hang it on the cross
For Christ has borne our brokenness
And dearly paid the cost
To turn our trials to triumph...
Hanging on the cross.

My brothers and sisters, whatever sufferings we have now in our lives, illness, loss, grief, disappointment and disillusionment, let us hang them on the cross.