

FROM SERVANTS TO FRIENDS

(Friendship Born From the Paschal Mystery)

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THE LORD'S FLOCK GROW DIGEST

Fr. Sonny De Rivera, SVD

In the last days of Jesus' life, He became increasingly intimate in His teachings to His closest followers. Jesus startled the disciples with a radical statement: "I no longer call you servants...instead, I have called you friends for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you" (John 15:15). They were being taken to a much deeper level of relationship by Jesus - a friendship that was born from the Paschal Mystery.

1. The Paschal Mystery.

- 1.1. It refers to the moments in the life of Christ, that is, His passion, His death and His resurrection.
- 1.2. Similarly, it refers to the three (3) important events (a.k.a. Triduum) which are the Institution of the Holy Eucharist on Holy Thursday, the Crucifixion and Death on Good Friday, and the Resurrection of Christ on Easter Sunday.

2. Jesus offered a new relationship with His disciples.

2.1. Friendship at the Last Supper.

- 2.1.1. The Eucharist reveals the intimacy of divine friendship. Jesus offered Himself- "This is My body (and blood) which is given for you" (Luke 22:19).
- 2.1.2. Jesus washed the feet of His disciples (John 13:1-17). He was willing to do anything for them even the lowliest thing to show His genuine love and care.
- 2.1.3. The elements of friendship revealed in the Eucharist are intimate friendship (Zacchaeus, Lk. 19:1), self-giving love or sacrificial love (like a mother's love for her child), trust and confidence (we become vulnerable when we trust), service & humility (washing of the feet), and fidelity (beyond betrayal, Jesus was willing to lay down His life).

2.2. Friendship at the Cross: redemption and the meaning of friendship reached its radical expression.

- 2.2.1 Jesus' friendship did not withdraw when confronted with suffering and death.
- 2.2.2 New bonds of love were formed. He offered Mary to the world, and to Mary He offered us.
- 2.2.2. The elements of friendship on the Cross are: self-giving love, fidelity in suffering (Simon of Cyrene), compassionate presence (the crying women), creation of communion, mercy and forgiveness (repentance of the thief), and faithfulness unto the end.

2.3. Friendship at the Resurrection: hope was renewed.

- 2.3.1. Jesus restored friendships despite the disciples abandonment. His first word to them was "peace."
- 2.3.2. The elements of friendship were revealed: personal recognition (He called Mary by name); faithful presence (He walked with the sorrowful disciples in Emmaus); and restoration after failure (He restored Peter who denied him 3x).

Conclusion:

The heart of the Paschal Mystery is not only about suffering and redemption. At its center is God's invitation to us for an authentic and intimate friendship built on trust and obedience, and rooted in love. Jesus likewise offers us a relationship that imitates His sacrificial love, that is, putting another person's well-being above our own.

Reflection:

What kind of a friend are you to Jesus? And what kind of friend is Jesus to you?

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, help us to develop a deeper and more intimate friendship with You, long for your closeness every moment of our lives, and share our true hearts with You. In Jesus' Name. AMEN!*

SCRIBES MINISTRY:

Transcribed by: Helen Angeles-Del Mundo

Edited by: Jo Advincula

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5 Catanduanes near corner West Ave & Del Monte Ave, QC.



help@lordsflock.org