

“Justice For Laura” Novena - 9 Days of Prayer

Day Nine



Scripture Passage: “The Resurrection of our Lord”

“But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel; and as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise.” And they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told this to the apostles; but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home wondering at what had happened.” -LUKE 24:1-12

Meditation:

After three years spent in the intimate company of our Lord during His public ministry, after seeing countless miracles and witnessing so many prophecies fulfilled right before them, the apostles do not believe that the Lord has risen. They did not believe! They who were so close to Him and left all they possessed to follow Him did not believe that He had risen from the dead. The women too - they had no faith in the resurrection until the angel declared it to them, for they had gone to the tomb with spices to anoint the body. The apostles were afraid of being persecuted for their affiliation with Jesus, so they HID themselves away in the upper room! Peter and his brothers went back to fishing.... Incredible....

God asks so little of us in comparison with what He Himself gives. He lavishes graces and blessings upon us and we hardly even stop to notice. The ONE thing which God has asked for from the very beginning is our faith; that is all! And everything else will fall in place. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever would BELIEVE IN HIM would not perish, but have eternal life.” Eternal LIFE!! Do we really believe in EVERYTHING that Jesus taught us? By His words? Deeds? Through His own apostles Whom He commissioned to teach all nations? Or do we pick and choose which doctrines and dogmas are “true for us” (as if objective truth can be subjectively interpreted) and leave the rest?

The Lord has risen! He is alive! And if there is one thing which the resurrection tells us it is that Jesus Christ truly is the Son of God! He IS the One Whom He Himself said: “I AM.” And if He IS, then WE ought to follow EVERYTHING which He has taught and commanded – and more than anything else we MUST heed His commandment of love: “Love one another, as I have loved you.” How did Christ love us? He laid down His life for us! He suffered and died for us! He fed and feeds us with His own body and blood nourishing us in the life of grace and empowering us to fulfill that command!

The Passion of Christ was in vain unless we live a new life, and unless we are striving to live that new life in Christ, even daily seeking improvement and sanctification, then we offer a grave insult to our Lord in return for His loving sacrifice for us. He died to pay the infinite price for our sins, thereby opening up the possibility of heaven for us, but He did SO MUCH MORE: He has EMPOWERED US to live a new, redeemed, TRANSFORMED life through grace, and He holds that grace out to us in a totally free and gratuitous gift. But we cannot receive that gift unless we first believe in it. The gift is HIS LOVE.

GOD IS LOVE.

The Love which He offers us is capable of producing a radical transformation of our hearts, but He will never force it upon us. All of the old testament prophets speak of God's love for His people as the love of a husband for his bride, but the bridegroom cannot force his love upon his bride – that would not be love, that would be rape. It is the same with God, and God will NEVER “rape” us with His Love. He holds it out as a free gift and awaits our reply. If we BELIEVE in His gift, then we have nothing to fear, and we should OPEN ourselves FULLY and totally to Him, and allow that Love to permeate and penetrate us, and it WILL transform us into “a new creation.” Conversion is not simply saying a little prayer telling Jesus that we believe in Him and accept Him as our Lord and Saviour, it is ALLOWING Him to ENTER our hearts in a POWERFUL way to RESTORE us to the life of grace. And in allowing Him in, we must surrender everything to Him, and let Him CRUCIFY every evil and disordered passion in our hearts - “take up your cross daily and follow me” is not only a matter of bearing patiently with the sufferings of this life, although that is part of it also, it is a matter of bearing the spiritual crucifixion which is necessary for us to be transformed in Christ and redeemed. And it hurts. It is gut-wrenching, in fact. But if we allow the Lord to crucify all of our sinful ways then He will resurrect every pure and good desire of our hearts, and the fullness of Love which He Himself will pour into our hearts will be our qualification to Love as Christ loves. This love will not only give the strength, but even the holy desire to lay down our lives for the good of others - the actual yearning to sacrifice all that we must to bring others to the Love of God, because once we have tasted this “extravagant love” we will not want to rest until the whole world knows about and is immersed in it.

God longs to pour out this love on all of us, and to fill us with the ecstasy of blissful Trinitarian Love, but He will not force our hand. We must receive it as a GIFT. And to receive, we must BELIEVE.

Before Christ told us to love as He loves, He told us to ABIDE in His love, and that abiding can only happen in and through a deep and contemplative prayer life. We are not all called to be hermits or live in cloistered monasteries, but there IS a sort of everyday mysticism which we ARE all called to, and it is through that every day living of a deep prayer life that we truly discover and encounter the God Who is Love – and we “abide” in that love. And in that abiding we allow God into the deepest, darkest, most secret places of our hearts and He floods light upon those caverns of sin and transforms them into luminaries of divine love, thereby empowering us to share His Love with others.

In 1965 Jackie DeShannon sang: “What the world needs now, is love, sweet love. It's the only thing, that there's just a little of.” Amen to that. Let us abide in Christ's love through prayer. Prayer - it's actually the ONLY thing which our Lord specifically asks of us in the whole of the four Gospels - “Watch and pray that you do not enter into

temptation.” “Could you not watch with me one hour?”

Keep watch. Know and abide in the Love that truly satisfies, and abiding in His love, pray that everyone in the world, and especially Laura's murderer, will come to know and abide in that Love. Amen.

And we pray for Justice For Laura.

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Abba, Father,

You have revealed Yourself as the God of Love Who desires all Your children to be saved, and Who will run to embrace any soul who sincerely turns back to You.

We lift up the soul of Laura's killer, Your beloved child who has wandered in a far away land squandering the inheritance which You, his most Loving Father, have bestowed upon him. We beg the Holy Spirit to sing Your song of Love into his heart. Speak to his soul of his dignity and beauty as Your child, and give him the confidence to turn back to You in trust and repentance.

We ask this through the infinite merits of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Divine Mercy Whose compassion knows no bounds.

Amen.

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