

## Good Friday 1

After the homily we are going to bring the crucifix veiled, Jesus crucified hiding behind a purple cloth. Purple used to be a royal colour, because it was the most expensive colorant to produce. Herod covered Jesus with a purple robe, to mock him. This is why we use this colour. We cover the crucifix because we don't know if he is still alive; we don't want to see him dying for us. The unveiling signifies the death of Jesus. Before it was hidden; now we know.

We are going to unveil him slowly, each limb with music, to remember his wounds. We are going to sing "Behold, behold, the wood of the cross." Slowly, for us to make sure we see him, we look at him, we contemplate him. Slowly to see each one of his five wounds engraved in his flesh. I recommend you to look into his eyes. We are normally afraid of looking at him. Why? Because this is what we have done to him. Jesus, with his body, is telling us: this is me. We need to face Jesus, Jesus as a man. Can you hold his sight? Can you look at him straight?

Then we are going to venerate him. One by one, through a long queue, with time to spare. We need time to repent, to atone for our sins. We are quick to sin, but we are slow to say sorry. Contrition normally drags its feet. We are not going to use three crucifixes to go faster; otherwise, it would look like Calvary, with the two thieves on both sides of Jesus. I wouldn't like to kiss the bad thief. We are going to kiss him, to soften his suffering, to try to make up for our sins. Sometimes children don't want to kiss him; they are rightly afraid because they can see beyond us. Can we kiss him after inflicting him so much suffering, so much pain? It looks a bit like Judas' kiss. We need to cry in front of him, a cry of repentance.

The crucifix shows us his five wounds, wide open in front of us. We can find refuge in them. Saints have a lot of devotion to Jesus' wounds. They remind us of our own scars, those wounds that haven't been healed, that are part of our brokenness. We complain about them, but we don't allow Jesus to heal them. Jesus is proud of his wounds; he shows them as medals, a proof of what he has gone through. In the army, when you get wounded, they decorate you with a medal. Our scars show that we have fought, and that we have been wounded. We should be proud of them; they are like medals. If we look at them as proof of what we have suffered, we can begin to heal. Instead of complaining about them, we can begin to understand why God allowed those things to happen, see them as medals and give thanks for them.

When Jesus' body was taken down from the cross, it was placed in the arms of our mother. His blood stained her clothes, but she didn't care, because she wanted to hold him for the last time, his body still warm. She wanted that moment to last for ever, and kiss him for the last time, remembering when she had him in her arms when he was a baby, crying for her milk.