

## Lent Meditation 7 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021



### Col.3,1-3

**“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. “**

Jesus’ death and resurrection must both be understood to be *for us*. Jesus died for us and he rose for us. We must therefore consider what it was that cost Jesus his life. Manifest in those that took it, it was sin and alienation from God. It was “for us” precisely in *this* sense. “*God made him who knew no sin to be sin for us.*” (2Cor.5,21), “*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: ‘Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.’”* (Gal.3,13)

Christ could not have died *for us* by accident or from old age, but only in the way that meant he would die *our* death – on the cross. And the death he died was that of the sinner, of man alienated and separated from God, of man rejecting God’s claim and love.

Through his death, because it happened on the cross by the one who had no sin and gave his life “*as a ransom*” (Mk.10,45), the sinner was given his own death, but such as to be death to sin and to alienation from God. “*When Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.*” (Mt.27,50-51)

In his resurrection Jesus received life; and the life he received, which was not subject to sin nor death nor alienation, he received *for us*. “*I live; and you shall live also.*” (Jn.14,19) Who, what and where Jesus now is, that he is for us. This totally and utterly revolutionizes who, what and where we are. With Christ our life is now in God, both hidden and to be revealed. Through Christ’s death we have died, through Christ’s resurrection we have been raised.

The hiddenness of who, what and where we are through Christ calls us to

express this – our identity! – in ways that show our death to sin, our reconciliation to God and one another, our willingness to carry each other's burdens, our being alive to the truth that we do not belong to death and that God is faithful to his covenant of grace in Jesus Christ.

Through Christ our life is in God, in him our identity new and other than it is in ourselves. Going by the identity we seek in ourselves we will set our minds on earthly things (strongly and zealously so, with all the God- and self-alienating repercussions and perversions this must entail). Going by the identity we have in Christ (dead to sin and alive to God) and the life which through Christ is in God, we will seek to match this new and other – our real! – identity with new expressions, not seeking “earthly things” but setting our “minds on things above.”

For this we must always seek the efficient cause in him who died and rose for us, even Jesus Christ.