

Session 4: Man of Sorrows

WHAT WE FOUND

- Isaiah saw him centuries early: a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, whose credentials are sufferings known from the inside.
- The great exchange of Isaiah 53: our griefs, sorrows, and sins move onto him; the wounds stay his, and what crosses back to us is what they win, our wholeness and our healing. And the crowd's verdict, smitten by God, was the friends' theology from Job, overturned by the surrounding claim that the griefs he bore were ours.
- In Acts 8 the apostolic Church left us its own answer key: beginning with this scripture, Philip told him the good news of Jesus.
- From the Cross, Jesus prayed the opening line of Psalm 22: the lament we prayed together in Session 2, complaint braided with creed, still addressed: My God, my God. The Lord himself died praying lament.
- The psalm he reached for ends in vindication, and says of the afflicted one: he has not hid his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him (Ps 22:24). The Trinity was not broken; he assumed us in the state of our waywardness of sin, so as to say that cry in our name (CCC 603).
- The sealed sheets opened, and each of us answered the question again at the foot of the Cross.

THREE VOICES WORTH KEEPING

St. Leo the Great (Passion sermons, in summary): the one hanging there is true man, truly suffering everything ours, and true God, truly saving: he assumed our weakness without laying down his power.

St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein) (The Science of the Cross, in summary): the Cross is not admired from a distance but entered; she wrote it as the Reich closed in, and died at Auschwitz having offered her life with her people.

St. Ignatius of Antioch (Letter to the Romans 4): in a common English rendering: I am the wheat of God, and I am ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of Christ.

LIVE IT THIS WEEK

1. Pray all of Psalm 22 once this week: both halves, without skipping either.
2. Put a crucifix where your day will collide with it; when suffering shows up, say Psalm 22:24: he has not hid his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him.
3. Choose one small suffering of this week, a minor one, and bring it with you next session. You will find out why.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed."

Isaiah 53:5

Before next session: Read Colossians 1:24 slowly, twice. It will sound wrong. Come ready to say why.

Catechism references for this session: CCC 599-600, 603, 618