

Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday



Pietro Lorenzetti, *Deposition of Christ from the Cross*, detail, c.1320.

HOLY WEEK 2021

COMMUNION AND LIBERATION TORONTO

Guided listening to Giovanni Battista Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*

ANGELUS

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary,

R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done unto me according to Thy Word.

V. And the Word was made flesh,

R. And dwells among us.

V. Hail Mary, Full of Grace, The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

R. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of death.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. Let us pray:

Pour forth, we beseech You, O Lord, Your Grace into our hearts; that we to whom the incarnation of Christ, thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His passion and cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through the same Christ, our Lord.

R. Amen.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

V. Veni, Sancte Spiritus.

R. Veni per Mariam.

SPIRITO GENTIL: NOTES FOR MEDITATION

BY FR. LUIGI GIUSSANI

Stabat Mater dolorosa: Pergolesi's hymn helps us to perceive mysterious joy, paradoxical consolation, and vigorous certainty that challenges life's happening. It helps us always. Truly, he is like a brother who, walking with us, sustains our shared faith, shared memory and shared loyalty to our Mother, from whom the event sets out in every moment, to enter and fill our lives.

Who felt the presence of this terrible contradiction, who most felt the presence of the King, of the great Mystery? Who felt most the pain of man's past, present and future rejections of Him, the pain of this life which man spends in forgetting, refusing or denying Him? Who felt this pain most? Who felt most the Mystery of his presence? Who felt most the Cross, God on the Cross, if not Mary? How her eyes must have been filled with her Son on the Cross, against the backdrop of all things, the backdrop of her own life, her Son, Christ on the Cross!

Let us imagine her when she woke up in the morning, imagine how she passed her day; she believed in what she believed in. She is the point in which Christ was never banished, not even one inch, one cubic millimeter, one gram. She is the point in which sorrow for the world's evil was most crucial. This is the reason why and the way through which she took part in God's death, Christ's death. The hate the whole world lived and was to live reverberated through her. The hate that killed Christ was totally absorbed into the flesh, the bones, the heart and thoughts of this girl; the truest, greatest hate that has ever existed.

We cannot have compassion for Christ or participate in our Lady's sorrow unless we risk our hearts and accept the plan the Father has for our lives. This plan implies our participation in Christ's very Cross: the acceptance of sorrow and sacrifice, the contradiction of life.

A human heart cannot remain indifferent to all that happens, thanks to the event which will remain until the end of the world. He dies and rises every day until the end of the world; "*Quis est homo qui non fleret?*" Is there anyone who wouldn't cry? We must fix our eyes on what our Lady lives. We wouldn't be capable of knowing, but by gazing on Her we can begin to know. No matter what state our heart is in, let us ask to participate in our Lady's sentiments: *grant that my heart may love Christ God*. There is nothing that can make our hearts more human than looking at Christ in sorrow, no matter what the conditions of our lives and our spirit may be.

When our flesh dies, may the glory of Paradise be given to our souls: this is why Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, this immense cry of pain, passionately pursued and felt, ends in the most glorious music conceivable, it finishes with the Amen.

Everything we say, in terms of relationships, possession, joy, enjoyment, desires, everything has death waiting for it, it has a limit. Only Christ takes away this limit, only Christ saves the relationship we have with our father and mother, saves the relationship you have with the man you love, saves the relationship you have with the truth which emerges from your gaze, full of curiosity, on things, saves the life you have in you, the gusto for yourself, your love of self. He saves you in Paradise, but Christ's paradise begins here, because Christ rose here. This is what the Amen means, the greatest Amen in music, which concludes Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*. Amen: yes. Yes to whatever you, Christ, want, because only You can remove this limit. You can remove it al-

ready now in this world. Nothing more is lost, already now in this world. This is an experience we are called to live here, not tomorrow but here, today. He is here.

Life has a destiny, Christ died for this destiny of ours, the glory of Paradise. Friendship is a companionship that is guided to our destiny. This is the Amen we live, that we can live every day of our lives — it is already the endpoint, the goal in action: our friendship. The Amen in the *Stabat Mater* is a cry of joy, of glory. It is not out of place in the heart of Good Friday, because he died in order to rise and thus dominate time and space and reach us. The Cross is a condition placed by the Father, the Mystery. What we must verify are the consequences of obedience, that is, of faith. In faith any cross flourishes in peace, in gladness, in joy, in a truth, which is the joy of our humanity. Therefore the words of the song are also a wish: “May Christ rise in all hearts”. The form this joy takes is not always the same, it differs for people in each epoch of history, it differs in the various stages, for each one of us, of God’s people; the form of the glory and joy arising from the cross is not always that expressed in those grandiose, fascinating monuments, built in a Christian era, which dominate the whole surrounding plain. This glory may also be expressed by a few natives gathered in a hut or by a small group of persecuted Christians, meeting in secret to say a prayer or celebrate a Mass. In any case, the true form of glory and joy is that which our hearts must assume, a form of glory and joy which means a greater truth of reason and a greater capacity for gratuitousness in our hearts.

STABAT MATER TEXT & TRANSLATION 13TH CENTURY FRANCISCAN HYMN

Stabat Mater dolorosa
Iuxta crucem lacrimosa
Dum pendebat Filius.

Cuius animam gementem
Contristatam et dolentem
Pertransiuit gladius.

O quam tristis et afflicta
Fuit illa benedicta
Mater unigeniti!

Quae moerebat et dolebat,
Pia Mater, dum videbat
Nati poenas incliti.

Quis est homo qui non fleret,
Matrem Christi si videret
In tanto supplicio?

Quis non posset contristári
Pia Matrem contemplári
doléntem cum Fílio?

Pro peccátis suæ gentis
vidit Iésum in torméntis,
et flagéllis súbditum.

Vidit suum dulcem natum
Moriendo desolatum
Dum emisit spiritum.

Eja Mater, fons amoris
Me sentire vim doloris
Fac, ut tecum lugeam.

Fac, ut ardeat cor meum
In amando Christum Deum
Ut sibi complaceam.

Sancta Mater, istud agas,
Crucifixi fige plagas
cordi meo valide.

The grieving Mother stood
weeping beside the cross
where her Son was hanging.

Through her weeping soul,
compassionate and grieving,
a sword passed.

O how sad and afflicted
was that blessed Mother
of the Only-begotten!

Who mourned and grieved,
the pious Mother, looking at the torment
of her glorious Child.

Who is the person who would not weep
seeing the Mother of Christ
in such agony?

Who would not be able to feel compassion
on beholding the pious Mother
suffering with her Son?

For the sins of his people
she saw Jesus in torment
and subjected to the scourge.

She saw her sweet offspring
Dying, forsaken,
while He gave up His spirit.

O Mother, fountain of love,
make me feel the power of sorrow,
that I may grieve with you.

Grant that my heart may burn
in the love of Christ my Lord,
that I may greatly please Him.

Holy Mother, grant that the wounds
of the Crucified drive deep
into my heart.

Fac ut portem Christi mortem,
passionis fac consortem,
et plagas recolere.

Inflammatum et accensum
per te, Virgo, sim defensum
in die iudicii.

Fac me cruce custodiri
morte Christi praemuniri
confoveri gratia.

Quando corpus morietur,
fac ut animæ donetur
Paradisi gloria.

Amen.

Grant that I may bear the death of Christ,
share his Passion, and
commemorate His wounds.

Inflamed and on fire,
may I be defended by you, Virgin,
on the day of judgment.

Let me be guarded by the cross,
armed by Christ's death
and cherished by His grace.

When our flesh dies,
may the glory of Paradise
be given to our souls.

Amen.

COMMUNION AND LIBERATION

Communion and Liberation is an ecclesial movement founded in 1954 by Fr. Luigi Giussani, and officially recognized by the Holy See. In its essence, Communion and Liberation is a proposal for education in the Catholic faith.

The primary instrument for the education of those who adhere to the Movement is School of Community, which consists of reading and personal meditation upon a text, followed by a communal meeting with a large or small group, either in a public place or in a member's home.

The method used is a constant comparison between the Christian proposal and one's own life, in order to continually verify — in the light of one's experience — its capacity to respond to human needs in every aspect of reality.

For more information on the writings of Father Giussani and the life of the movement in Canada, visit ca.en.clonline.org.

For more information on the weekly meetings and events of Communion and Liberation in Toronto, contact toronto@clonline.ca.