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Good Friday

The Prelate's Good Friday
Reflections broadcast on EWTN
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Today we want to be with Christ on the Cross. I recall some words of St. Josemaría Escrivá one Good Friday. He invited us to personally relive the Passion, hour by hour, from the Agony in the Garden of Olives, the Scourging, and the Crowning with thorns to His death on the Cross: “His omnipotence bound by human hands, they lead my Jesus from place

to place amidst the insults and blows of the people.”

Each one of us must take our place in that crowd because our sins were the cause of the immense sorrow that afflicted the soul and body of Our Lord. Yes, each one of us drags Christ, an object of mockery, here and there. Because of our sins, we are the ones who cry out for his death. And He—perfect God and perfect man—allows us to do it. The prophet Isaiah had predicted it: “Mistreated, he opened not his mouth; like a lamb led to slaughter, like a sheep mute before its shearer.”

It is right that we feel responsible for our sins. It is logical that we be very grateful to Jesus. It is natural that we make reparation, for He responded to our lack of love by loving us totally. During this Holy Week, Our Lord seems closer to us, more like his fellow human beings. Let us reflect

on these words of John Paul II:
“Whoever believes in Jesus carries the Cross to victory, as an undeniable proof that God is Love.... But we must never take faith in Christ for granted. The Easter mystery, which we relive during Holy Week, is always present to us” (*Homily*, Mar. 24, 2002).

This Holy Week let us ask Jesus to awaken in our souls the awareness of being men and women who are truly Christian, for we live face to face with God, and in Him with all people.

We must not let Our Lord carry the Cross alone. Let us embrace with joy the small sacrifices of each day.

Let us make use of the ability to love which God has given us in order to make specific resolutions, careful to avoid mere sentimentality. Let us tell Him sincerely: Lord, never again! Never again! With faith, we ask that we and everyone on earth might

discover why we must hate the mortal sin and abhor the deliberate venial sins that caused our God to suffer so much.

How great is the power of the Cross! When Christ is the object of scorn and mockery for all the world; when He is there with no desire to be released from those nails; when no one would give even a penny for his life, the good thief—one with us—discovers the love of Christ in agony and asks for pardon. “Today you will be with me in Paradise.” See how powerful suffering is when it is accepted in union with Our Lord! It is able to draw from the most painful situations moments of glory and life. That man who spoke to Christ in his agony, finds remission of his sins and happiness forever.

We have to do likewise. By losing our fear of the Cross and uniting ourselves to Christ on the Cross, we

shall receive its grace, its power, its efficacy. And we shall be filled with peace.

At the foot of the Cross we find Mary, Virgin most faithful. On this Good Friday, let us ask her to lend us her love and courage so that we too might know how to keep Jesus company. Let us speak to her in those words of St. Josemaría which have helped millions of people: “Tell her: My Mother—yours, because you belong to her on many counts—may your love bind me to the Cross of your Son; may my faith never fail, nor my valor, nor my daring, in fulfilling the will of our Jesus.”