

April 14, 2017, Good Friday

John 18:1—19:42

In an ancient Good Friday legend, Jesus has died on the cross and all the angels in heaven are in a state of confusion. They knew what he had said about resurrection, but at this point, he is nowhere to be found. "Where is he?" they ask. "We thought that he would be with us now and that we would be the first to know that he is risen." What they would soon discover, however, is that Jesus' first order of business after the crucifixion was to descend to the lower regions to find Judas and offer him his hand in forgiveness, and together they would appear before the angels in their heavenly abode.

We read in today's Good Friday account that after Pilate sent Jesus away to be scourged, the soldiers "twisted some thorns into a crown and they put it on his head ... and they slapped him in the face." Jesus then appears wearing the crown of thorns and a purple robe. He is greeted by, "The chief priests and the guards (who) shouted, 'Crucify Him! Crucify Him!'" (Jn. 19:2,5-6) and they gave him a cross to carry to his place of execution. They crucified him on that first Good Friday.

**Reflection questions:**

Through areas of conflict and violence, the Way of the Cross bears a message of peace and reconciliation. How can we find a peaceful existence in this time of turmoil in our country?

Through areas of poverty and human degradation, the Way of the Cross bears a message of equity and justice. Have we adequately supported those in need through giving to the Rice Bowls?

Through areas of condemnation and retribution, the Way of the Cross bears a message of compassion and forgiveness. Can we take forgiveness of those who have offended us to a sincere prayer?

*Reflection by Deacon Malcolm Lunsford, Saints Peter and Paul church, Merrillville.*