Were You There?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Were you there when they crucified my Lord? O sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nailed him to a tree? Were you there when they nailed him to a tree? O sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. Were you there when they nailed him to a tree?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
O sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when the stone was rolled away.

Were you there when the stone was rolled away.

O sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when the stone was rolled away?

Old Plantation Hymns, Boston 1899)

Prayer Leader:

Cheryl Keehner, CSA 3 / 27 / 2018

The Power of Presence: Being There





Our prayer is characterized by silence ~

Be still and know that I am God!

In that silence we listen for a new word.
God is present in all our lives.
God cares for us, and
our life experiences are a source
of deepening knowledge of God and self.

Inspired by God's Word in the silence we share from our hearts.

Renew · Refresh · Refocus

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To Ponder: Cheryl Keehner

Here at the beginning of Holy Week, let's focus on the women who meet Jesus along the way to Calvary. Of course, Mary was there. That's no surprise. What parent doesn't stay by a son or daughter who is suffering? Certainly - being present is a choice, calling for great strength. It makes one wonder how "suffering shared" eases the pain?

A woman named Veronica emerges from the crowd apparently unafraid of the Roman shoulders. In contrast to Simon of Cyrene, she does not have to be coerced into action. She is focused totally on Jesus who is obviously exhausted. She may well have seen Him falling and being dragged to his feet. Removing her veil, she wipes his face covered with sweat and grim. Legend says that the imprint of His face remained on the cloth. True or not, surely His face and memories of that event are imprinted on Veronica's heart. How is it that she was unafraid? Did her "perfect love" cast fear out?

Further along the way, we notice the weeping daughters of Jerusalem. So who were they and why does Jesus respond to them the way He does? Maybe these women were "professional mourners" common in the Arab world even until now. They stir up emotion in a crowd attracted to the drama unfolding right before them. Jesus' response "don't weep for me" stuns them into realizing that when we witness human suffering and injustice, tears are simply not enough. When evil is not confronted, it lives on for generations, in the lives of children and the children's children.

This week we close our Lenten observance by reliving the events that led Jesus through his death to the Resurrection. Pay attention to the sorrow of Mary, the compassion of Veronica and the tears of nameless women. The Liturgy is meant to move us to greater awareness of the sufferings of others carrying the cross in our time. The words of Jesus: "whatever you to do others, you do to me" should be enough to motivate us to reach out and confront the suffering and evil we witness day by day.

Reading:

The Prayer of Saint Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that
I may not so much seek
to be consoled, as to console.
To be understood, as to console.
To understood, as to understand.
To be loved, as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned.
It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.



Sharing...

a word...
a phrase...
a reflection...