

There's a reason it's called 'Good Friday'

As we move through Holy Week toward the Holy Triduum and Easter, how do we approach with joy events so poignant and sad? The betrayal of Jesus, his Passion and death by crucifixion show the brutal way in which we, humans, treated the greatest gift of all: the Son of God.

In an interview with Archbishop William E. Lori about his new book, "The Joy of Believing: A Practical Guide to the Catholic Faith (Word Among Us Press, 2015), the archbishop talked about the great mysteries of our faith and the sadness of Holy Week. Listen in:

"I think the greatest mystery of our faith is God himself" he said. "It's the inner life of God. It is God Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is that God so loved the world. It is that we would be caught up in this love.



"So, when we talk about our faith, we're not just talking about a bunch of disconnected truths that are really hard to understand. We're not talking about riddles, puzzles, or the occult.

"What we are talking about is the hidden life of God, this light inaccessible that has been made accessible because God so loved the world that he revealed himself in history, most fully in his Son Jesus Christ and in revealing himself to us, revealed ourselves to ourselves, showing us our great dignity and our destiny to share that friendship, and that shapes everything," Archbishop Lori said. "Once you really believe that, once you have fallen in love with this mystery of the God who is love, it just changes everything in your life."

As we approached Holy Week and the end of Lent, I asked him about all the sadness that comes with the Passion and the Crucifixion - How does the joy come from that?

"You know it's not for nothing we speak of Good Friday," the archbishop said,

because what is really being revealed “especially in Holy Week is God’s self-giving love. It’s the Lord Jesus who gave himself to us in the Eucharist in anticipation of giving himself to us and to the Father on the cross.

“It’s the revelation of a love that for sure exposes our sins for what they are, but then applies to our sins and the sins of all the world a love that is stronger than sin and more powerful than death,” he said.

“And so, even as we mourn our sins, even as we feel sadness over the price of our salvation, nonetheless what should overtake us in Holy Week are joy, gratitude and thanksgiving, and even when we are contrite for our sins as always we must be, at the end of the day it’s always the horizon of hope.

“We’re always able to be contrite because God is loving, merciful and that his love and mercy not only makes us feel better, it actually conquers our sins. Wow! What a gift. God has given himself to us and we get to share in his death to sin so that we might be free and joyful and begin even now to share in his risen life.”

What a gift indeed. As you ponder the readings and prayers of Holy Week, keep in mind that we know the end of the story - and it includes Christ’s resurrection and our salvation.

Photo by Karen Osborne | CR Staff