

The Right Response to the Crisis at Hand, II

ters the injections. It makes us shudder to hear of the brutality to cats or dogs or the noble horse. If we read for example of an innocent animal fastened to a wall with nails, slashed with sharp instruments and left there to linger out its life, it would be a terrible thing to read. What moves us to sorrow over this? I suppose it is that the animal has done no harm. That they have no power of resistance.

This is what happened to our Lord. He laid aside His glory, disbanded the legions of angels, and came to us in utter helplessness armed only with truth, meekness and righteousness. We have it within us to turn our thoughts of the animals to the Lord.

And why is it that we shudder to hear of cruelty to children? What if wicked men took and crucified a young child, like ISIS has done, deliberately stretching out its poor little frame and nailed its little arms to a cross bar of wood, drove a stake through its two feet, fastened them to a beam and left it to die? It is almost too shocking to say or write.

We cannot bear the thought, yet what is the child's agony to His? Who deserved it more? Which is the more innocent? Which the holier? Was He not even more gentler, sweeter, meeker, more tender, more loving than anyone? Than any child? How then can we not be shocked at His crucifixion?

When the Patriarch Joseph was sent by his father to his brethren on a message of love, when they saw him they said to themselves "Behold, this dreamer cometh; come now, therefore, and let us slay him." (Gen. 19.20) They did not kill him but put him into a pit in spite of the anguish of his soul, and sold him as a

slave to the Ishmaelites, and he was taken to a foreign country where he had no friends. What is especially shocking about it is that Joseph was not only innocent and defenseless, but their younger brother whom they should have protected. And he was so confiding and loving that he would not have come to them at all except for his desire to do them service. And this is an indication that the passion of the Lord exceeds that of any innocent sufferers in that He went to His persecutors in love.

With this in mind, the greatest response we can give to the present crisis is reparation. We must do what we can to repair the damage, and this is an act of faith. The damage has been the greatest to our good Lord.

For all those who have suffered abuse, we make reparation, so that Christ can heal them. It is beyond our power to heal, but not beyond the power of Christ. This is the great purpose of our holy hours and Masses and prayers; to make reparation to what happened to our Lord from the abuse, and those abused might experience healing and restoration full.

To this we can add a prayer, written by Cardinal Newman, when we contemplate the sufferings of Christ, saying to Him with the good thief, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom; that is, remember me, Lord, in mercy, remember not my sins, but Thine own cross; remember Thine own sufferings, remember that Thou sufferedst for me, a sinner; remember in the last day that I, during my lifetime, felt Thy sufferings, that I suffered on my cross by Thy side. Remember me then, and make me remember Thee now."

And with the repudiation of the entire sexual revolution must go a fervent embracement of the virtue of purity. This insert and the previous one interrupt a series of inserts On the Gaining and Keeping of Purity, but I consider this struggle for purity to be vastly superior as a response to the crisis at hand than just about anything we could do, with one exception.

For that struggle releases grace, and grace is above all what is needed for us to defeat the forces allied against our Lord both within and without the Church. The financial, psychological, sociological and political responses to the crisis require have various responses which need to be addressed (well beyond two bulletin inserts), but "Our battle is with principalities, thrones and dominions; the world-rulers of darkness" as St. Paul put it.

And if we embrace the virtue of purity, then the "pure of heart shall see God." This virtue will enable us to grasp holy teaching, and see the truth of the Magisterium; that which has been taught always and everywhere.

And if we can see the truth of the teaching of Holy Mother Church, then we can clearly see the evil of the dissent and heresy which is always attached to impurity, and our purity goes out to help heal the wounds caused by impurity.

But there is an even greater response to the crisis than this, though this last response is dependent upon purity. To understand it, consider for a moment that unless we have a true love for

Christ, we are not really His true disciples. And we cannot love Him unless we have a heartfelt gratitude to Him. And we cannot feel gratitude unless we feel keenly what He suffered for us. No one can attain love for Christ who feels no distress or misery at the thought of His being in pain. And no one can have true self-reproach who has not realized that his sins had a share in causing these pains.

We know quite well that feeling is not enough – as if to feel and nothing more. For to feel distress at the suffering of Christ and to go on to disobey Him is not love. It is mockery. The real love of Christ both feels rightly and acts rightly. At the same time right conduct with no feeling for Him is at best imperfect religion.

We must ask then, how are we to learn to feel a proper anguish at the thought of Christ's sufferings? The answer is by dwelling on them. This is in everyone's power. For if I solemnly think of the history of those sufferings, then I will gradually gain to a measure a sense that these are not a tale written in a book, but a true history. And the Gospels which contain the history are open to anyone. They will have access to that which the greatest of saints have used to gain love and sacred fear.

Start with the description of Christ as a lamb from the texts. He was defenseless. So if Scripture describes Him thus, then we can combine this with our horror when we read an account of animals used for tests in laboratories. It makes us shudder to read of their cries the animals give when the scientist adminis-