

Excerpts from the Spiritual Itinerary - Part 2: Retreat (6th day)

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Some characters in the Hebrew Scriptures are said to have been "sealed" or marked in their bodily reality because of their encounter with God.

Jacob "walked with a limp because he was wounded in the hollow of his thigh" in his night struggle at Jabbok (Gen 32:31); **Moses** "did not know that his face was radiant after he had spoken with the Lord" (Ex 35:29); **Jeremiah** felt his word "like a burning fire enclosed in his bones" (Jer 20:9). In the Song of Songs, the **bridegroom** says to his beloved: "Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm..." (Song 8:6) and **God recognizes Godself as "marked" by his people**: "Behold, I have you written on the palms of my hands..." (Is 49:16) The apostle **Paul** asked: "From now on, let no one trouble me, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus..." (Gal 6,17)

Approaching the Paschal Mystery invites us to be bearers of the marks of Jesus, those traits that appear in the new way of which the Constitutions speak: "strength in weakness, freedom in service and life through death." (Const. 41)

The true disciple stays with the Master in difficult moments. As we approach the passion of Jesus, we may not be able to do more than this: to stay with him. **Hearing him prepare...**

Song: [Unless a Grain of Wheat By Bernadette Farrell](#)



Letting the grain fall into the ground...

Excerpt from the Gospel

"Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. Anyone who loves their life will lose it." Jn 12:23-26

A heart stripped bare is a "grain of wheat that has fallen to the ground", dead to its ego, to let God in, and thus others in. And when we study living beings, we realize that it's not the most competitive who are the most resilient, but those who help each other the most. Mutual aid emerges in times of crisis and in difficult environments.

At the very hour when he is overwhelmed, when he is approaching the Passion "with a great cry and in tears" (as the letter to the Hebrews says), Jesus can continue to say in all confidence:



"Thy will be done" ... would we say that?



To glorify - far from prestige or the quest for recognition - is literally to reveal God's presence. "The Son of Man must be glorified": *make yourself known, reveal yourself as you are, so that we can enter into your unique desire that "all may be one" and thus work ardently so that everyone finds a worthy place in this world.*

Prayer together: Psalm 50 (51)



Lord Jesus, you who will kneel to wash the feet of your disciples, teach us to adopt a "low position", to serve with humility and in relationships of closeness, reciprocity.

Prayer of intercession:



Let us revive our faith so that even the seeds sown in the Society's soil over so many years still possess a powerful energy for growth that will flourish and grow beyond our control. We become aware of our temptations to be anxious and our resistance to "not knowing" ... We ask for the challenging wisdom of managing the balance between work and rest, between resistance and abandonment.

(Spiritual Journey, page 80)

Help me to open my eyes to myself, Lord, so that the things I have to shed may die within me, and so that I may be able to serve you and others in peace.

Lord Jesus, you who kneel to wash the feet of your disciples, teach us to adopt a "lowly position", to serve with humility and in a relationship of openness and mutuality.

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

(Laudato Si prayer)

Song : **Dieu ne peut que donner son amour** (God can only give faithful love). Taizé

God only give faithful love. O God ever caring.



Grain fallen into the ground:

Place a few handfuls of soil on a cloth in the centre of the room and a small basket containing seeds. We can put them in the soil "so that the seed will die", in other words, so that it will let its husk open up and allow all its power of life to burst forth....

