

## Thursday 22 April 2021

Today is Thursday the 22nd of April, the feast of Our Lady, Mother of the Society of Jesus.

Gillian Fisher and Michael Chance sing Stabat Mater Dolorosa by Pergolesi. 'By the cross from which hung her son, his mother stood in sorrow and tears.' As I listen, I can prepare myself to contemplate Mary's share in the suffering and the sacrifice of Jesus, a sacrifice made freely, and made out of love for the world.

In today's reading, taken from the Passion of Jesus in John's Gospel, we can contemplate how that love is expressed. Imagine the scene described here, the cross, and gaze upon Mary as she stands by her dying Son.

John 19: 25-30

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

This can be a painful scene. Are you able just to be present to it as Mary was?

As you stand next to her, do you sense what she is feeling? Is there anything you want to say to her?

As you listen to the passage again now, see if you can focus on Christ Himself. How does he look upon His mother and the disciple whom He loves? What do you feel drawn to in Him?

This scene, however difficult, is a scene of deep love. Love affects us in a powerful way. Turn to Christ or to Mary now, and speak to them about what this scene has sparked off in you, bringing today's reflection to a gentle end in God.



Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.