

Thesis statement to remind me constantly

You can share in the ongoing work of redemption through your imitation of Christ Jesus especially as the "suffering servant" transforming your dark lonely times into a love union with the Divine.

*Section one Outline Introduction 80 Seconds*

40 years ago I had the opportunity to participate in the Good Friday Liturgy for the first time in this chapel. Good Friday was always beautiful. With the cross procession and music, Good Friday became the high emotional point of the liturgical year.

To the best of my memory, Dot and I only missed one Good Friday here and that was when we were with our grandchildren in Santa Fe.

The culture of an area - the peoples view about God and how god interacts with them plays an important part in forming the worship practices. In Santa Fe, we watched thousands walking over twenty miles to the shrine at Chimayo. The procession still included some penitentes carrying crosses. Chimayo's culture goes back about 800 years to Spain's hermanos penitentes -the brotherhood of penitents. But what about Queen of Apostles? Our culture is just newly born. What helped form it when we started? What is happening now?

What can be done to help it mature?

*Section Two Outline Salvation History (Israel) 90 seconds*

The QAC culture is partially inherited. Biblical, it is both Christian and Jewish. Jesus' culture was certainly Jewish as was his cosmology that a single uncreated God was responsible for a three tired universe heaven, sky and earth and on that earth a paradise lost.

Our Salvation History is recalled in our liturgy this evening. Our proclaiming that Jesus was the Lamb of God references

the ritualized sacrifice of a lamb for the Passover meals and the spreading of its blood on the lintel of the doorways to save the death of the firstborns of the Jewish slaves in Egypt.

The carrying of the cross by four members of is reminiscent of Israel's wandering in the desert, carrying the 10 commandments in the Ark of the Covenant. The ark, placed in the first temple was the only physical manifestation of God on earth. The temple was destroyed at the time of the exile, but when rebuilt has no ark of the covenant and an empty holy of Holies.

The first reading was the section of Isaiah referred to as the suffering servant. Some Biblical scholars see it as a reference to the nation of Israel. Realizing that it was written during the exile of the Israelite in Babylonia, when most were slaves or servants, this interpretation becomes more acceptable and opens a new redemptive view of Acceptance of suffering and God being present with the people of Israel (in union) and not in the holy of holies, accessible only to the High Priests.

*Section Three Outline 60 seconds*

*Section four Outline 90 seconds*

The Queen of Apostles community came into being just after Catholic scholars were allowed to pursue the scriptures scientifically, the release of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin first books, the rise of another Jesuit Karl Rahner, the revamping of Holy Week liturgies and Vatican II. All of these are building blocks of the Culture of QAC along with a parish democracy; love of liturgy, music and a small enough parish to allow all members to attend Mass at the same time.

And now we gather on yet another Good Friday and I've been asked to share my reflections. My thoughts are based very much on the loss of Dot, a book by James Carroll "Christ actually" and conversations with so many of you these past seven months

I had to learn that I needed to think of Dots life as a whole and not to concentrate just on the last year.

Bottom line of Carroll is that it wasn't Christ's death that redeemed but his life taken as a whole that was in sync with God's perpetual flow of redemptive love.

Carroll speaks of how Jesus anticipated the pain, accepted it and transformed it into a union with God. This transformation -pain to union—is becoming part of QAC's culture

Father Tom spoke of this on Palm Sunday “Sudden circumstances can take us from joy to sorrow... but in exercising our God given imagination and our faith this week we might also allow our God to help us somehow turn our most painful moments into praise. This is the journey of Holy week. This is the journey of our lives... somehow turning our painful moments into praise and trust... Let us pray for this capacity “

James Carroll also suggests that we imitate Christ by concentrating on acceptance of the painful moments and then move on to compassion for others.

That is what the stones are for... something you can touch and carry as you move to the veneration of the cross. A way to grasp and accept the painful moments in your life, your family

your friends, a way to reach out to another. It can be a stoning stone that Jesus tells you to drop. It could be a marker that you visited the grave. Leave the stones at the foot of the cross and then move on to compassion and love for others in union with the divine.

*Section five Outline 40 seconds (Check exit hymn?)*

James Carroll ends his recent book on Christ with an exhortation to carry “the cross” in a simple way. I’ve paraphrased this as an ending today.

Walking out of this chapel today may we carry with us the memory of the cross we contemplated today. Carry with us the understanding that his death was -- as is ours -- the summary of our whole existence.. Realize the life of Jesus must always weigh more than his death.

Walk out with a simple Jesus, an ordinary Christ... one any person can imitate and by that imitation bring Christ to life day by day , bread by bread, cup by cup, taking care of ordinary needs of those we love... and handling the ordinary sufferings that we face, Walk out as imitators of Christ, wanting mainly to be kind, compassionate and true,, taking heart from our companions on the way, saying with those who went before and those to come after:

Amen! So may it be.