"We adore You, O Christ…"

Good afternoon to you and to each of my esteemed listeners, and welcome to EWTN's Open Line Tuesday edition! Barbara McGuigan here, alive and most grateful to be with you every Tuesday! It is such a privilege to defend the Lord and Giver of Life – and to carry out this mission with you in this epic battle for the world's soul. What a time to be alive!

God's airwaves are open; here are the numbers to call:

In North America call 1-800-585-9396
Outside North America call 1-205-271-2985
Our email address is always Openline@ewtn.com

Brothers and sisters, we can be confident that every trial we have suffered and continue to suffer, every rejection, every misunderstanding, every excruciating moment that almost seems to break us down, was suffered to a superlative degree by Our Savior. As the ancient hymn says, "See, from His head, His hands, His feet sorrow and love flow mingled down; Did ever such love and sorrow meet or thorns compose so rich a crown?"

During this holiest of weeks, we are immersed in the Passion of Our Lord. This is good. Hopefully we have the good sense to make the time to *be* immersed in the brutality of Our Lord's suffering. Why do I say that? So that we will have the grace, the disposition, the humility and the meekness required to emulate our Merciful God in His Passion. There is a cost to loving God. The cost is accepting our own cross.

Fr. John Hardon, the late Jesuit theologian whose canonization process is underway, wisely explained the cost of our cross:

> When God's love sends us the cross, He enters our lives, as it were, unbidden. He does something to us -- what a blessed preposition -- He does something to us that we do not naturally like. He causes us some pain and as you know pain is anything we do not like. The most philosophical definition of pain is: what the human will does not like. And then God watches how we accept the suffering that this brings. The pain may be physical, like some infirmity or ravaging disease: it may be social, like the estrangement from someone we really love; it may be emotional, like an unjust accusation never rectified or undeserved criticism for something someone else had done; it may he psychological pain, like dryness of spirit, confusion of mind or a despondency that we seem unable to shake off; it may be spiritual pain, like darkness in prayer or a siege of scrupulosity or loss of that clarity of faith that we used to have. No matter. God who is master of His gifts has the right to take them away. He can take away the precious things; He can also impose the painful things. And let's never, unlike Job, fail to bless the same God…

> None of us naturally likes to surrender what we like: it's almost too obvious for words. And none of us is naturally drawn to pain. But just here is the difference between nature and grace. What nature fears grace can actually learn to desire; and what nature runs away from, grace—would you believe it—can make us seek. This is where we need the wisdom of the saints. St. Ignatius of Loyola wrote: "If God gives you an abundant harvest of trials, it is a sign of the great holiness to which He desires you to attain. Do you want to become a great saint? Ask God to send you many sufferings. The flame of divine love never rises higher than when fed with the wood of the cross, which the infinite charity of the Savior uses to finish His sacrifice…"
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> The cost of loving God is high but God comes through. He rewards the price we pay with an experience of His presence, a sense of His intimacy, and a joy, that the saints tell us, is so sweet, they would not exchange their sufferings for all the pleasures in the world.

This week, we will think and say, over and over, "We adore you, O Christ, and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world." I would like to repeat Fr. Peter John Cameron's extremely real, extremely personal litany that first appeared in 2008, in the *Magnificat* Catholic prayer book. May we all ponder the refrain after I read Fr. Cameron's words:

We adore you, O Christ, when we do not get our own way, "because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world."

We adore you, O Christ, in the midst of day-to-day aggravations, frustrations and annoyances,

We adore you, O Christ, when we live deprived of recognition or gratitude,

We adore you, O Christ, when dealing with others who exalt themselves and demean us,

We adore you, O Christ, when injustice gets us down,

We adore you, O Christ, in the face of worry, anxiety and fear,

We adore you, O Christ, when we forgive others and show them mercy, especially when it hurts,

We adore you, O Christ, in the face of others' thoughtlessness,

We adore you, O Christ, in confronting our inner daily rebellion,

We adore you, O Christ, in refusing to give in to vanity and self-importance,

We adore you, O Christ, in always thinking about others first and putting them first,

We adore you, O Christ, when suffering the agony of depression,

We adore you, O Christ, in our inability to make sense out of life or to have things follow our plans, especially when we're trying so hard to be good,

We adore you, O Christ, in rejecting self-assertion and self-satisfaction,

We adore you, O Christ, in the midst of the oppressiveness of life – its futility, drudgery, pointlessness, and tedium,

We adore you, O Christ, in letting go of the order and control we crave,

We adore you, O Christ, when accosted by the unfairness of seeing the wicked succeed,

We adore you, O Christ, despite the world's contradiction, humiliation, and derision,

We adore you, O Christ, by refusing to live according to our feelings,

We adore you, O Christ, when we are under-appreciated,

We adore you, O Christ, when our egoism and willfulness flare up,

We adore you, O Christ, when we are persecuted for your sake,

We adore you, O Christ, even when confronted by crisis and catastrophe,

We adore you, O Christ, as we live by love and no lesser motive,

We adore you, O Christ, in finding peace in the total surrender of self,

We adore you, O Christ, in accepting that God works in the ways we least expect,

We adore you, O Christ, as we search for self-worth only in God's love for us and nothing else,…because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Brothers and sisters, how does your magnanimous soul intend to bless God in the days ahead? Fr. Cameron has enumerated many ways. What's on your mind? Let's talk about it? Here are the numbers to call: 1-800-585-9396 and 1-205-271-2985. Should you wish a copy of this monologue, go to www.voiceofvirtue.org, sign in and click on Open Line under "We Adore You, O Christ…" March 30, 2010.

Closing: Thanks yet again for your excellent calls and emails. It is a blessing to call you a brother or sister in Christ. The English Catholic author, artist and mystic

Caryll Houselander, who died in 1954, wrote the following in her insightful book published in 1955, *The Way of the Cross*:

> In Christ's Passion, all his secrets were out. Every detail of His Passion revealed something more of His character as man – not only His heroism and His majesty but His human necessities, and the human limitations which He deliberately adopted as part of His plan of love in order to be able to indwell us as we are, with our limitations and psychological as well as physical necessities and interdependence on one another. He was not only simulating our humanness outwardly but feeling as we feel; not only feeling His own grief, fear, compassion, need of sympathy, and so on, as man, but ours" not only knowing every nerve and fiber of His own love for us, but that of each one of us for one another…There are certain inevitable experiences which are common to all and from which none can escape. One of these is death. Another is love. Every human being alive is on the road to death. Everyone is capable of love for someone, even if it is only for himself, and the price of love, perhaps particularly of self-love, is suffering. But the power of love, and this does not apply to self-love, is to transform suffering, to heal its inevitable wounds.
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> Now it is easier to understand what it is that brings the incongruous motley of people together to "make the Way of the Cross." Each one meets himself on the Via Crucis, which is the road through death to life. In Christ, each one of us finds the meaning of his own suffering, the power of his own capacity for love.

Until next week on Open Line, Blessed be God and may He bless you this week by a very intimate encounter with your Lord and Savior. Bye for now.