

Good Friday

What went through your mind as you just listened to the Passion narrative? Was it a feeling of sadness, or of feeling loved, or perhaps you experienced no feeling at all. There is no correct feeling here. Simply pay attention to what you felt, and ask God's Spirit to tell you what She is trying to tell you in it.

You may remember Mel Gibson's movie, "*The Passion of Christ*." It was all about how much Jesus suffered, it was all about pain. This is not biblically accurate. The meaning of Jesus' Passion was not in how much he suffered, it was in how much Jesus loved us. This is clear from the Gospels. They simply refer to his passion and with only a few words, "*And they took him out and crucified him.*" That's it.

The message of the cross is that suffering is not the end of the story. It's about being taken to the other side of the cross where life is abundant and without end. The "trick" is that we won't see the other side of the cross until after we leave this side.

Fr. Roger Vermalen Karban, the pastor of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish in Renault, Illinois, writes: "*The evangelists don't zero in on Jesus' suffering. For them, his pain is much more psychological than physical. Their purpose in writing these narratives is not to lead their readers to proclaim, 'Thank you, Jesus, for dying for me!' They're much more interested in having us simply say, 'Thank you, Jesus, for showing me how to die!'*"

Read Jesus' passion clear through sometime. Get in touch with your feelings as to what he went through. And then, get in touch with your feelings about what you are going through. Then pray to see where God's Spirit is leading you in it.