



May 2004

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Apostleship of the Cross

Houston Center



THE CROSS OF THE APOSTLESHIP IN THE LENTEN SEASON

Father José Ortega MSpS lead our Lent Retreat.

From Friday night to Sunday afternoon, we meditated in the Gospel from the Sundays of Lenten and Pentecost; it was a beautiful and significant way to meditate how the symbols of the Cross of the Apostleship make an irruption from the Gospels. As we reflected in the passage, Father José would choose the corresponding symbol, until the Cross of the Apostolate with all its elements was formed.

Also, we compared how Our Lord's Passion is narrated in the Gospels of Mark, Matthew, and Luke. Using some parts of the Apostolic Letters "Salvifici Doloris and Dives in Misericordia, enlightened our understanding of the true meaning of suffering with love, and the mercy of a loving Father.

Thank you Father José for helping us in our Lenten Meditation!

We hope to see you soon!

CELEBRATION OF THE 98TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MYSTICAL INCARNATION

What better way to thank and celebrate this God's central grace to Conchita, that with the celebration of the Holy Mass!

To celebrate this very special day for all of us, Conchita's spiritual children, we had the presence of Father Rudy Sánchez, who celebrated the Eucharist. During the same he asked us questions to deepen in, and to understand, that important grace.

Members of the three sections of our Center made ourselves present, and after the Eucharist, in a fraternal atmosphere, we had a social gathering where we shared different dishes.

IMPORTANT DATES

MAY

- May 3** - 109th Anniversary of the Apostleship of the Cross
 - 107th Anniversary of the Founding of the Sisters of the Cross of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
May 9 - Mother's Day
May 20 - The Ascension
May 30 - Pentecost

JUNE

- June 5** - V Local Assembly of Houston at St. Thomas More
June 6 - The Holy Trinity
June 13 – The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ
June 18 - The Sacred Heart of Jesus
June 19 - The Immaculate Heart of Mary
June 19 - Father's Day

In celebration of the 109th Anniversary of the Apostleship of the Cross, we now share with you different comments from four members of the Apostleship of the Cross.

GERMANY AND THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE CROSS

All true spirituality is enrichment for people of all cultures and countries. I would briefly like to talk about two points, with which the Spirituality of the Cross here in Germany can be a help and new orientation.

Germany is one of the countries where one strives a lot to make everything perfect. The expectations that are assigned to us from the outside, ask of us that we carry out our duties in a good and exact way. Also, our life is determined in a competitive way, and each of us strives to achieve the best possible recognition. This can lead to the possibility of getting lost and to depend on the approval of others.

The Spirituality of the Cross shows us a path to find ourselves, by which, in our relation with God, and in our giving ourselves to Him, we discover our own being. We can experiment that at the end, but not always with ease, it fills us more to lead our lives by God's mandates, instead of only trying to reach recognition and obvious triumphs.

The mentality of submission encloses the danger of losing the humanitarian disposition with which the sensibility to the needs and problems of our fellow beings decreases. Painful situations that simply are part of our lives are pushed aside or are tried to be ignored. Precisely, the Spirituality of the Cross helps us in such situations, to not put them aside, but to accept them and also to accept ourselves in our daily happenings. The Spirituality of the Cross invites us to live the painful situations through our union with God, since He, in these situations, wants to accompany the human being.

The meetings of the groups of the Apostleship of the Cross help us to continue and to remain on the path of the Spirituality of the Cross. The talk, the mutual struggle in the definite transformation of its contents in our daily life, and the mutual support, allow us to remain on the path.

The first group of the Apostleship of the Cross in Germany was formed in the year 1992.

Ana Weber
Germany

MY EXPERIENCE AS NEOPHYTE IN THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE CROSS

It was on a Wednesday while I was in a prayer group in St. Theresa's Chapel, from the first moment that I heard a lady explain about the Apostleship of the Cross, that I felt drawn to belong to such an Apostleship.

Through the meetings, our animator has explained clearly and simply, the importance and privilege of having priests in our community. This has changed a lot my way of thinking in relation to priests. Before I saw priests as people that had a profession, and that they worked on Sundays and on other special occasions. Sometimes I would find mistakes in them, and even criticized them.

After attending the meetings of the Apostleship, my attitude toward priests has changed in a radical way. Today, I see a priest for what he is, a very special individual chosen by God; I see him as if it is Jesus in our community. Before, I did not pray for them because I thought that they did not need my prayers. Today I pray for them with fervour because I am convinced that these are human beings with the same temptations, inclinations, and weaknesses, as other men. I also ask Our Lord for priestly vocations.

The criticism and the faults that I would find on them no longer exist. How can I criticize or find faults in God's chosen ones, the ones that give me the opportunity to reconcile myself with God, and to receive a God made alive through the Holy Eucharist?

Thank you God, because through the Apostleship of the Cross I have learned to know your chosen ones, the priests!

Nelly Marcucci
St. Theresa's Section
Sugar Land, Texas

I FEEL THAT I AM WALKING FIVE INCHES ABOVE THE GROUND

Ever since March 6, I feel like I am walking five inches above the ground. On this wonderful day within the celebration of the Mass, I received the Cross of the Apostolate, and formally became part of the Apostleship of the Cross.

For so long, I have desired to state in the presence of my families, the commitment I have carried in my heart. This day came in the form of an invitation from the Apostleship of the Cross. I said "Yes!" to living out the priestly call of my baptism... to live more deeply in the heart of Jesus like Mary.

Last summer I was encouraged to attend the II International Congress of the Spirituality of the Cross in Mexico City. This experience deepened my understanding of the Family of the Cross. In this Congress I sensed for the first time that all these people, laity and religious alike, were on an equal footing; each Work of the Cross was distinct and yet living as one.

We all need to support each other in the important ministry to which we are being called daily. Each one of us is called to reach out in love to all people through the Cross with the Holy Spirit. Although the world appears to be falling apart around us, we must continue to live as a spiritual bridge and as light... transparent of God's love for all people. Our Jesus ever sustains us... the Holy Spirit inspires us as we live in the center of life... the Heart of Love.

Kathy Valdez
Mt. Angel, Oregon

THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE CROSS IS A CALL FROM GOD

The Apostleship of the Cross is a call from God to learn how to love Him as Jesus does. It is both, a gift and a challenge. If you truly offer Him your will, He will change you in the person you were meant to be, no matter how long it takes. Jesus meets us where we are and changes us. I am still changing after 20 years in the Apostleship of the Cross.

Mary Marshall
Houston, Texas
St. Thomas More's Section

In celebration of the 107th Anniversary of the Sisters of the Cross of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we now share with you a comment from one of the Sisters of the Cross.

JESUS, SAVIOR OF MEN, SAVE THEM!

Blessed Isabel de la Trinidad says: I want my life to be a hymn of praise to the Trinity.

And I have always said: I want my life to be a hymn of gratitude to God's Loving Providence.

For the home that he prepared for me...

For having given me life...

For having given me parents that made us know Him and love Him, and also love the Most Holy Virgin, (we were 14 brothers and sisters). Our parents would tell us that **THEY WERE OUR REAL PARENTS**, that They had entrusted us to them to take care of us.

When I was 23 years old I went to a retreat for eight days with the Sisters of the Cross of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to ask the Lord what He wanted of me, and He made it feel very clearly that He wanted me there.

What was it that attracted me? In the first place I felt that it was His **WILL**, something that our parents also taught us, that it was what is essential in life.

THE PERPETUAL ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT!

I had a friend that she did not yet tell her parents that she had a boyfriend. She waited for them to be sleeping, she would also go to bed, and she would get up at 11:00pm to talk to him. That also made me think, WHAT WOULD BE LIKE TO GIVE UP MY SLEEP TO BE WITH JESUS? And if all of that was not much... OFFER MY LIKE WITH HIM, WITH HIS LOVE, WITH HIS MERITS, TO THE HEAVENLY FATHER, BY THE HANDS OF MARY IN FAVOUR OF PRIESTS...!

I entered when I was 24 years old, in the feast of Christ the King, a 29th of October, with the certainty that Our Lord wanted me there, and I have never doubt it. If He grants me to be alive on October 29th of this year, I will celebrate 60 years of having entered this blessed Congregation in which Jesus has been faithful helping me to be faithful to Him also.

Help me to give Him thanks!

RCSCJ
Jesus Maria
Mexico

Words of Reflection...

The motto of the Apostleship of the Cross says Father Felix in his writings, is: LOVE-SORROW. Having love, which is charity, as motto, teaches man and the world the true love, the genuine charity, in other words, to love with the holy love of Christ's Heart. The Apostleship of the Cross also has sorrow as a motto; it teaches man and the world the true sorrow of sins, the true repentance, the true contrition.

The Apostleship of the Cross forms its members to work in the ministry of love and of penance.

(W.C.Cir. August 15, 1937)

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***Jesus, Savior of all people,
Save them!***