**Jesus on the Cross**

By Pedro Mendez

Recently, I have been reflecting on Jesus Christ on the Cross; even more than before. I don’t mean reflecting on the beautiful crucifixes we have in our churches and/or at home; but *on* *Jesus Himself on the Cross dying for our salvation*. As we know, at the time of the Roman Empire, dying on a cross was a cruel punishment reserved for non-Romans who had committed atrocious crimes. Dying on a cross was a shameful and awful punishment. And we, Christians, profess that the Son of God died in this awful, cruel, shameful, and painful way to save us. Saint Paul affirms: “we proclaim Christ crucified” (1 Cor 1:23).

Why did the Son of God accept, in obedience, this shameful death? Because of the *weight of our sins*. *Sin is more than only the external acts* by which we damage our relationship with God, ourselves, others and creation. *Sin is a condition rooted in our inmost being that damages the goodness we are created by God.* This condition is “disobedience, a revolt against God…[and]…‘love of oneself even to contempt of God’” (Catechism 1850). Sin is such a serious condition that the eternal “Word was made flesh” (Jn 1:14) to give Himself on the Cross for us. Why? Saint Thomas Aquinas would say that Jesus’ suffering death fits with the seriousness of our sins.

When one ponders the seriousness of our inner condition and its external consequences in our daily life, and the high price paid by Jesus on the Cross to redeem us, there is a gratitude to God and a deep desire to participate in Jesus’ suffering and glorious resurrection.

Have we pondered about the seriousness of Jesus on the Cross and his resurrection, and how much we need them in our *daily* lives in relationships with God, ourselves, others and creation? *If yes*, we might know what it means to establish a lifetime process of holiness with its ups and down, its crisis and its daily victories in Jesus Christ. *If not,* we might consider to accept God’s invitation to allow Jesus to redeem our wounded humanity and to elevate us to our true dignity and joy. This is made concrete through an intentional daily relationship with God, sometimes, led by a spiritual director or our pastors.

Isn’t this what Christianity is about? Let us ponder, then, the concrete high price of God’s mercy in Jesus Christ and how we respond to this gift from God.