

PASTOR'S CORNER

For the remainder of the summer I will be printing a series of essays concerning the Apostles Creed.

The Creed: *Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried*

Why the reference to Pontius Pilate? I suspect it is to emphasize the absolute historical claims being made by every proposition contained in the creed. Mary of Nazareth was really, demonstrably, actually, scientifically, biologically, a virgin before, during, and after the conception and birth of Jesus, her son. Jesus was really conceived by a miraculous overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, at which point a fertilized egg of Mary's made its way towards her uterine wall for implantation. Jesus is therefore actually the one, incarnate Son of God; not a human person, but a divine person who has taken unto himself, out of love for us, a human nature (this is the doctrine of the hypostatic union of the Second Person of the Trinity).

On the other hand, the historical reality that Jesus of Nazareth was crucified and died in Jerusalem hardly needs to be emphasized; people were crucified and died all the time under the Roman Empire. Two deeper things are being highlighted for us here, one each from the twin perspectives of the two different natures coincident in Jesus. First, the Son of God was actually killed on the cross. This means that in some unimaginable way, God has experienced the spiritual isolation of death. This is in opposition to those heresies that say that the Word of God, Jesus, only *appeared* to suffer and die. The creed asserts boldly that Jesus, as true God, did indeed actually and historically suffer abasement and death for our salvation. It was not an act. When we suffer and die, we can be assured that God walks with us each and every step of the way, for he was there before us.

Second, and from a human perspective as mentioned above, it probably didn't really need to be emphasized that Jesus, as true man, died on the cross. After all, there is no trouble for us believing that humans can die horrible, humiliating deaths. Nonetheless, the historicity being asserted sets the stage for what follows. Just as Jesus of Nazareth actually died on the cross, so too did he actually and historically rise from the dead. If we had had a video camera trained on the upper room on that first Easter Sunday, we could have recorded his stunning appearance and the disciples' shock and joy. Just as the crucifixion of Jesus was an event in time, measurable as they all are, so too was his resurrection from the grave. So too will be our own.

The familiar phrase, 'was crucified, died and was buried', not only further underlines his death, it also makes clear its nature; namely, that Jesus' death was a 'passion.' When thinking of the breadth of the term, it is best to at least bounder his passion by the sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary; that is, as beginning at least as early as his agony in the garden of Gethsemane and ending only upon his burial and the mystery of the hidden events of Holy Saturday. In truth, Jesus' humiliation, his self-emptying, and the absolute condescension which that implies for one who is a divine person, rightly begins with his conception and birth. That God would subject himself to the vulnerability and humility of life as a human infant is astonishing. That that life would end in a completely unjustified death brought on by the betrayal and denial and abandonment of his closest friends is unthinkable. Yet that is precisely what happened.

Bear in mind here that Jesus did not die in order to rise. He died in order to die and free us from death. Our own resurrection is not possible absent God's transformation of death brought about by his

own. We could never do this, only God. The manner he chose to do so honors God's indivisible mercy and justice. Jesus died. [God died. God rose because he cannot die.] Jesus rose. We will surely die; yet now we will rise (to hell or heaven is our choice). Conundrum upon paradox, but the result is a happy one indeed for those of us who deserve nothing.

Fr. Stephen Geer

Tenth Week after Pentecost

DAY	DATE	TIME	OBSERVANCE	MASS INTENTION
VIGIL	Aug 12	5:00 pm	Vigil of the Sunday Mass	Joanna Kong +
SUNDAY	Aug 13	9:00 am	The Most Holy Eucharist of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ	Loretta Smith +
		11:30 am	The Most Holy Eucharist of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ	Missa pro populo
Monday	Aug 14		No service	
			<u>Readings for the Assumption:</u> Rev 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; Psalm 45; 1 Cor 15:20-27; Luke 1:39-56	
Tuesday	Aug 15	9:00 am	The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Missa pro populo
Wednesday	Aug 16	8:30 am	St. Stephen of Hungary	Bob Sittes
Thursday	Aug 17	8:30 am	No service	
Friday	Aug 18	8:30 am	Ferial weekday (Votive Mass of the Sacred Heart)	Maria Quyle +
Saturday	Aug 19	8:30 am	St. John Eudes, Priest	Michael Moore +
			<u>Readings for the Sunday Mass:</u> Isaiah 56:1, 6-7; Psalm 67; Romans 11:13-15, 29-32; Matthew 15:21-28	
VIGIL		5:00 pm	Vigil of the Sunday Mass	Betty Susnjara +
SUNDAY	Aug 20	9:00 am	The Most Holy Eucharist of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ	Missa pro populo
		11:30 am	The Most Holy Eucharist of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ	Neophyte