

The one thing that we will remember of a Good Friday service is the Adoration of the Holy Cross.

Most of us would genuflect or kneel before the cross and kiss it.

Even the senior aunties and uncles would make all the effort to do this pious act.

Of course, there are other things in the Good Friday service, like the Readings, the Solemn Intercessions where we kneel and stand, and Holy Communion.

But the Adoration of the Cross is what we will remember most because it is experiential and expressive.

Coming forward and waiting for our turn to adore the Cross is like waiting in line for our turn to greet and talk with someone important.

The expectation grows as we come nearer to that person. And when we finally come face-to-face with that important person, then everything around us doesn't really matter anymore. It will just be us and that person.

Similarly, as we come before the Cross, we have come to that intimate moment with Jesus who suffered and died for us, and we express what is most personal to us.

We kiss the cross and we hold the cross and we become personal and emotional before the Cross.

It is a moment that lasts hardly 2 seconds and yet the memory of it is seared into our hearts.

But for this year, all we have are memories of the past Good Fridays and memories of our personal experiences of how we venerated the Cross.

But we still can have that experience as we follow the online Good Friday service or when we have a prayer service at home with our families.

We all have our own favorite devotional cross. Let us take up that cross and venerate it.

And, let us also remember that Jesus said that if we want to be His disciples, we must take up our cross and follow Him.

For this year, our crosses and the crosses of many others who are affected by the current pandemic are especially heavy and rough and tough.

With the rest of our brothers and sisters, we feel the pain of the Cross, we feel the weight of the Cross, we stumble and fall as we feel the Cross crushing us.

And we also feel like being nailed to the Cross and that we are coming to a dead end, in every sense of the word.

On this day as we look at the Cross, we must also feel the pain and the sufferings of our less fortunate brothers and sisters who are struggling in these depressive difficult times.

Yet, let us remember the “good thief” who was nailed to the cross next to Jesus, and his profound cry of faith in these words: Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.

As we hold the Cross of Christ tightly in our hands let us like the good thief, cry out to Jesus as we say:

Jesus, remember those who are suffering and in pain from the infection of the virus, and also those who have succumbed to the infection.

Jesus, remember the doctors, nurses, healthcare workers and frontlines as they continue to serve and also to protect them.

Jesus, remember those who have lost their jobs and those who are in financial difficulties caused by these difficult times.

Jesus, remember all of us as You lead us through this valley of Darkness into Your kingdom of light.

