COH/2005

GOOD FRIDAY -- 1992
TRE-ORE
ST. PAUL, SARASOTA

Rev. Carl F. Thrun

IN NOMINE JESU

ST, JOHN 19: 30

"IT IS FINISHED"

THE SCRIPTURES ARE FULFILLED! "HE IS LED LIKE A LAMB TO THE SLAUGHTER.... THE LORD HAS LAID ON HIM THE INIQUITY OF US ALL!"..... "IT IS FINISHED!"

From this side of heaven, men have DONE THEIR WORST! REJECTION -- SCORN -- the JEERING AND SNEERING AND MOCKERY -- the BEATINGS and the ABUSE -- CROWNED WITH THORNS and NAILED TO THE ACCURSED TREE ------ "IT IS FINISHED!" They thought they were getting RID OF HIM once and for all -- but He talks like the VICTOR RATHER THAN THE VANQUISHED! Little did they know that SOON -- all too SOON -- "DEATH WOULD BE SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY!" "IT IS FINISHED!"

From this side of heaven, we mortals will never be able to UNDERSTAND or COMPREHEND what it COST GOD to RECONCILE US TO HIMSELF. No one can ever go to CALVARY and conclude that GOD DOES NOT TAKE SIN SERIOUSLY! What happens between the FATHER AND THE SON -- the LIGHTENING BOLTS of the FATHER'S FURY AND WRATH against His Beloved Son Who takes OUR RIGHTFUL PUNISHMENT -- that REMAINS A MYSTERY. We will NEVER KNOW or FULLY UNDERSTAND IT. It all happens behind the VEIL where we are UNABLE TO WITNESS.... All we know is that "JESUS IS THE LAMB OF GOD WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD." And the blessed WORD OF THE APOSTLE rings out LOUD and CLEAR, like wonderful music to our ears: "FOR OUR SAKE GOD MADE HIM WHO KNEW NO SIN TO BE MADE SIN FOR US THAT WE MIGHT BE MADE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN HIM!" "IT IS FINISHED!"

From the other side of heaven, the ANGELS and ARCHANGELS look on AGHAST! They cannot believe what their EYES are seeing! WAS THERE EVER LOVE LIKE THIS? -- WONDROUS LOVE -- AMAZING, UNBELIEVABLE LOVE! "WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS" -- contemptable, despicable, self-seeking, self-indulgent, you name it -- "CHRIST DIED FOR US!" NOW -- HERE -- ON THE FRIDAY WE CALL GOOD FRIDAY. "IT IS FINISHED!" Our redemption is secure!

It is never easy to explain LOVE -- even in the HORIZONTAL RELATIONS OF LIFE. The LOVE OF A MOTHER for a REBELLIOUS CHILD -- the LOYALTY OF A WIFE to an UNFAITHFUL HUSBAND -- the DEVOTION of UNWAVERING FRIENDS! These have never been reduced to RULES OF LOGIC!.... Turn this MYSTERY UPWARD and OUTWARD so that it unites HEAVEN AND EARTH with the NAILS OF THE CROSS -- covers the DICTATOR in his power and the DRUNKARD and DRUG ADDICT in his pain -- reaches the PALACE and the HOVAL as well as the GRIEF of the FALLING SPARROW..... WE CANNOT EXPLAIN IT! IT EXPLAINS US! WE CANNOT UNERSTAND IT, but we can KNOW IT, LOVE IT, LIVE IT, and DIE ON IT. "IT IS FINISHED!" His cry breaks the silence -- It is heard at the DEATHBED, in the CATHEDRAL, in CHAPEL, the STREETS OF THE CITY, the VILLAGE, or WILDERNESS! NOTHING REMAINS TO BE DONE -- not FOR HIM and not FOR US -- ONLY TO BELIEVE! "IT IS FINISHED!"

From the other side of heaven -- as the ANGELS look on in amazement -- a MIRACLE takes place as they see EACH THORN IN HIS CROWN turn into a SHINING GEM in HIS DIADEM OF GLORY. They see the NAILS being forged into a KINGLY SCEPTER! They watch as the BLOODY SWEAT of the Garden and the DRIPPING BLOOD from His GAPING WOUNDS clothe Him with the PURPLE OF MAJESTY AND POWER! He has won the GREAT, FINAL, ETERNAL VICTORY! "IT IS FINISHED!" And the angels begin their ceaseless chanting or WORSHIP and ADORATION: "WORTHY IS THE LAMB WHO WAS SLAUGHTERED TO RECEIVE POWER AND WEALTH AND WISDOM AND MIGHT AND HONOR AND GLORY AND BLESSING" -- "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS -- AND HESHALL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER!" "IT IS FINISHED!"

Nothing remains for us to do other an LAUNCH OUT INTO THE DEEP where ETERNAL THOUGHTS and EVERLASTING LOVE lie in the HEART AND MIND OF GOD. There is ADVENTURE THERE, and HIGH COURAGE. There is the CROSS THERE TOO, and the COLD HATRED OF MEN. But finally and at last it will be FINISHED FOR US TOO and when the QUESTION is asked, "WHO ARE THESE ROBED IN WHITE?" the answer will come resounding back from the ends of the endless expanse of UNIVERSE itself: "THESE ARE THEY WHO HAVE COME OUT OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION; THEY HAVE WASHED THEIR ROBES AND MADE THEM WHITE IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB!" And ~~will~~ we will lift up our voices too and cry, "IT IS FINISHED!" Amen.