

Breaking Open the Word [Romans 5:5-11]

Christ died for us while we were still sinners

All Souls Day

Paul here reminds the Christians of Rome that God's love/power of the Spirit has already been 'poured out in their hearts'. Be aware that you are loved by God. Living in the power of the Spirit, growing in faith and mature in holiness is an on going experience for a Christian. Christians live in hope to share Christ's glory in this life and in the resurrection of the dead because redemption in Christ has reversed their subjection to sin. Forgiveness received in Christ's death on the cross leads a Christian in the path of discipleship and final union with Christ. From the cross flows the abundance of grace that transforms human fears of death. The power of God's love is at work in all who seek a share in divine glory. Death of Christ on the cross was the grandest expression of God's love- 'Christ died for us'. This love is placed in the heart of mankind. this love has, as if, snatched you away from the bondage of sin/death. Jesus: 'no greater love than laying down your life for a friend; I call you friends' [John 15:12-14]. Christ's death on the cross is God's initiative to effect love in us, love that even conquers death.

The grace of salvation came to us in our human condition, while we were still weak and did not know God's love. Power of sin overshadowed man's reason and will; we were ungodly. Before Christ's sacrificial death, sinful mankind was subjected to just punishment. Cross reminds the world of what God does for mankind. Obedience of Christ/his cross is immeasurable love of God. All of mankind's sin is in no way greater than love of God manifested on the cross of Christ. This initiates repentance in man and reconciliation with God. Christ's death is not a reward for human accomplishments of obeying some laws, but God's offering of friendship and reconciliation to mankind. Transforming grace is at work in those who welcomes this love! Paul says: faith in Christ and hope of eternal life with God is for us a matter to boast and rejoice. Our departed souls experienced this love of Christ. We pray today that they receive grace of purification and longing for God; that they enjoy the vision of God and the company of all saints.

Father Jose