

## Everything

As many of you may know, I had been away for the last 5 weeks on a 30 day Ignatian Retreat. It was all in silence with no TV, no cellphones, no laptops. Just Jesus and I on vacation. It was an amazing life-changing experience.

- I feel like I can really pray,
- I encountered the love of God in a new way,
- and I just feel blessed in preparation for my ordination to the diaconate in three weeks.

*There is so much more I could share but I will share with you a special grace I received from the Lord.*

I was contemplating one day on the *silence of Jesus* during the Passion. Many times in the passion narratives when Herod or Pilate are speaking to Jesus, he just remains silent. That really amazed me. At the moment when Jesus was being accused, he was *silent like a lamb led to the slaughter*.

But I knew at the same time that in the silence of Jesus, the Father was speaking a word, in fact, he was speaking his Eternal Word, Jesus Christ, and through Jesus Christ he was revealing something about himself. So I wondered, *what was the Father saying through Jesus, and particularly through his silence on the Cross?* As I thought about the brutal scourging, the painful crown of thorns, the excruciating crucifixion on the Cross, I heard a quiet voice from Jesus say: **He's worth it.**

It is as if Jesus was saying this: He is worth it. The Father is worth everything. All the pain and suffering I endured is nothing, it is like a drop of water in the ocean compared to overflowing bountiful love of the Father from whom all GOODNESS, all LOVE, all BEAUTY, JOY and BLESSING come.

Every time you see my cross, YES, *see my blood shed for the forgiveness of sins*. BUT EVEN MORE SO, see the ULTIMATE PROOF of the FATHER'S LOVE for you.

In the beginning of time, he fashioned this whole creation out of nothing and infused it with his own beauty and grandeur as a gift to you, his children, **but you would not believe his love; you thought that he was holding back**. And so he made covenant after covenant with your fathers and sent prophets to draw you back to him, **but still you would not believe**. Finally, the Father so loved the world that he sent me, his only Son,

this time *holding absolutely nothing back from you* to show that ***you are worth everything to him.***

So when you look at the Cross, do not doubt his love but believe! Listen with the EAR of your HEART for the Cross is a ***silent megaphone screaming***: HE IS WORTH EVERYTHING. HE IS THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE, THE TREASURE HIDDEN IN THE FIELD WHICH BECKONS YOU TO SELL EVERYTHING BECAUSE THE LOVE FATHER IS WORTH IT.”

At that moment when I turned towards heaven imagining what it would be like, I could feel this ray of light shining from heaven on my heart, this ray which felt like pure gratuitous love, pure beauty, pure joy just overflowing into my heart and out of my eyes. And for just a moment, I could feel this ray of light get wider and I could feel this warmth on my arms and in my blood and I was just bathed in the light of his love.

My dear brothers and sisters, HE IS WORTH IT.

That is why Jeremiah and John the Baptist were urging their people to repent *EVEN if it would cost them their lives*: “do you not see that your sin and disordered love for this world hardens your heart to the Father who loves you so much?”

That is why St. Jean Vianney would spend over 15 hours a day in the confessional, why all the apostles sold everything to follow Jesus, why the martyrs of the Church endured brutal deaths: because **he is worth it.**

*It is not that the things of this world are bad, it's just that the love of God is better.*

He is the source of all the goodness and beauty we find in the world and the created things are mere reflections and signposts ***pointing to his heart.***

My brothers and sisters let us ask ourselves: how much is the Father worth to me? Is he worth everything to me? If God asked me to give him everything (my possessions, freedom, understanding, memory), to follow him, is he worth it? Or are there things in my life which prevent me from loving him with an undivided heart? Do not be afraid to give him everything because he is worth everything.

“Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not receive many times more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life” (Lk 18:29-30).